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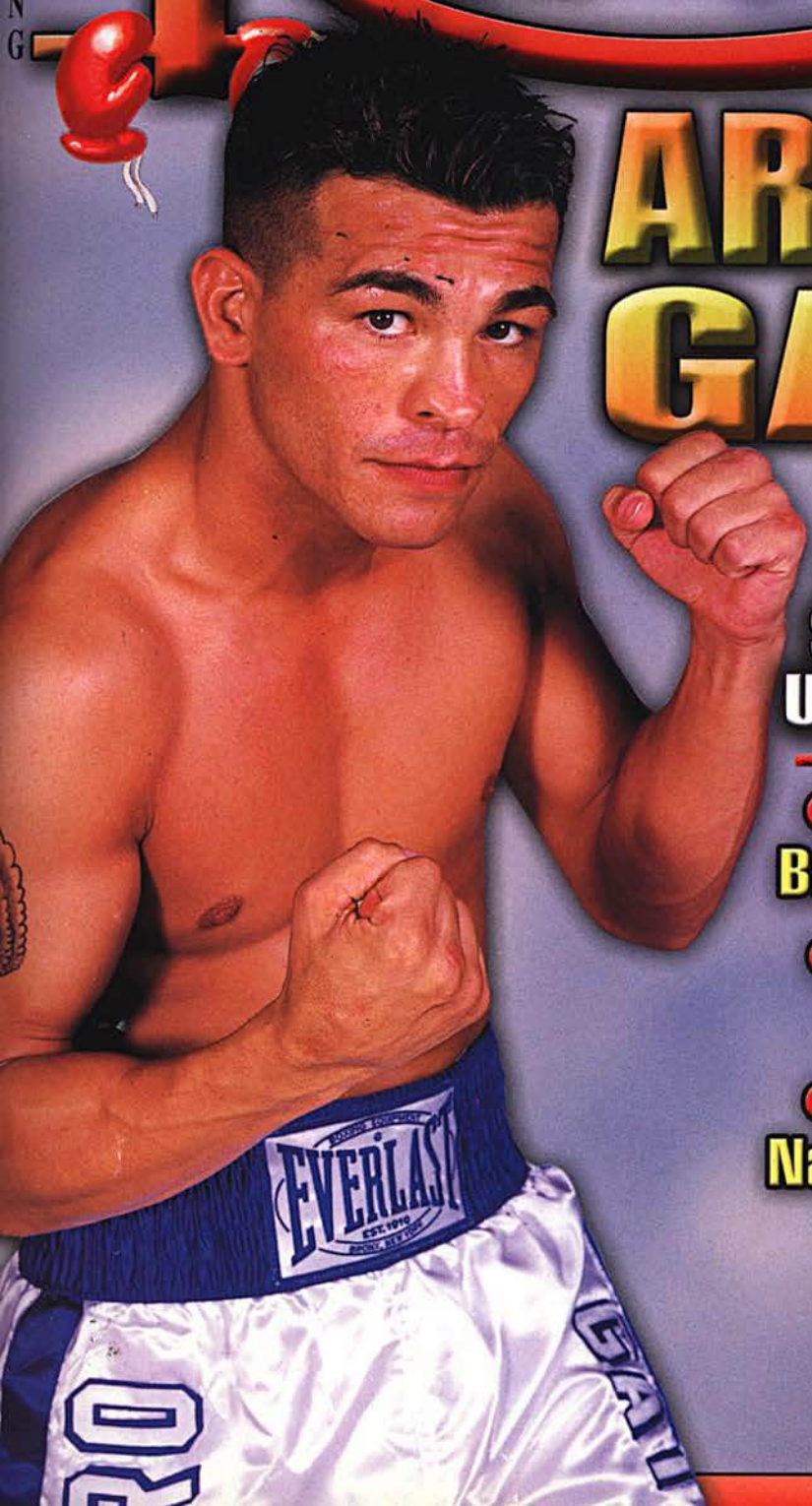

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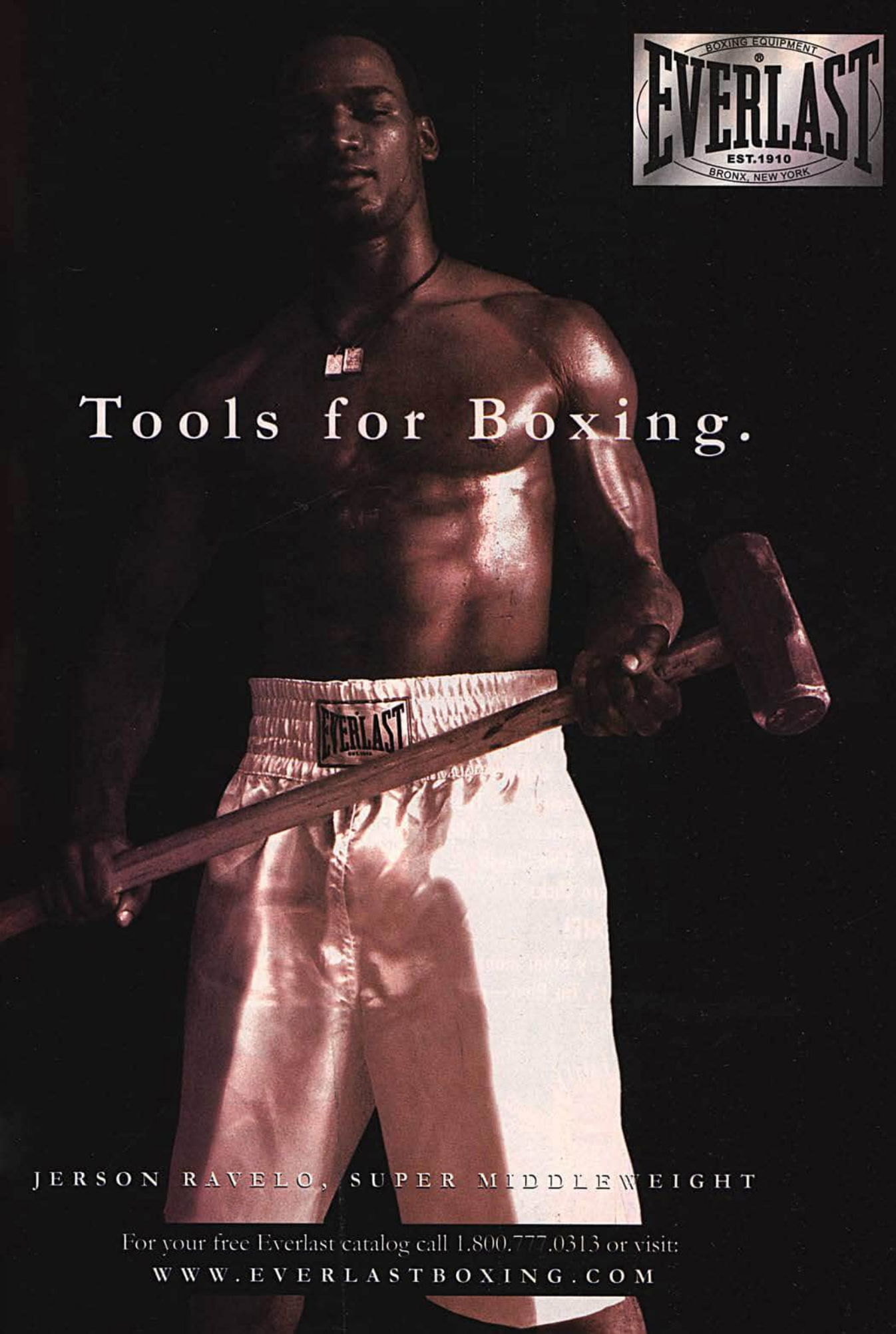
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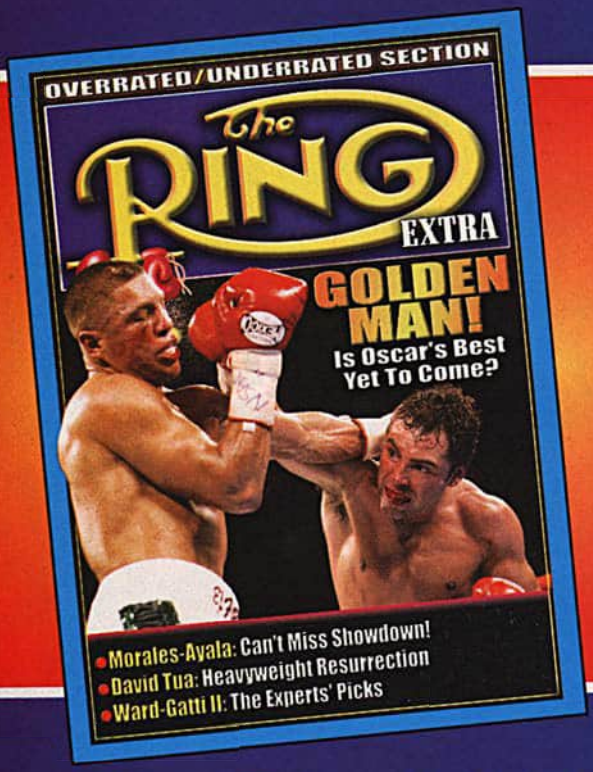

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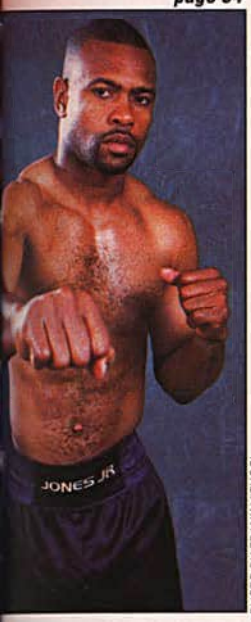

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

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RINGSIDE

I can't type as fast as Roy Jones punches, but there's a lot on the agenda this issue, so I'm going to charge out of the corner, fire a quick combination, and then move on to the next target:

•Like many of my colleagues and most fans, I think Lennox Lewis dishonored both himself and boxing when he sold his IBF title to Don King for a million dollars and a luxury automobile. True, giving up the IBF title doesn't affect Lewis' status as the heavyweight champion of the world, but selling the belt was a greedy, sleazy thing to do. Then, to make matters even worse, Lennox blessed King's power grab by turning up at the promoter's press conference and endorsing the same sort of dirty politics that once thwarted his own rise to the top of the division.

Shame on you, Lennox.

•Call me gullible if you want, but I believe Fernando Vargas was telling the truth when he said he didn't know he was taking steroids leading up the Oscar De La Hoya fight. Therefore, I'm okay with the fairly light punishment handed out by the Nevada State Athletic Commission (nine months suspension and a $100,000 fine). But I do believe steroid abuse is a growing problem and that all jurisdictions should test for them on a regular basis. I know it will cost money, but why not stop testing fighters for marijuana, which is not a performance enhancer, and spend the money testing for a substance that not only enhances performance, but also puts users' health in serious jeopardy.

•I don't know whether it's just the usual posturing that frequently precedes serious negotiations, but the word out of Marco Antonio Barrera's camp is that the featherweight champion isn't interested in a rubber match with Erik Morales. If he's serious, it's just not bad news for Morales; it's bad news for boxing.

Message to Marco: Certain responsibilities come with being the world champion, and foremost among them is fighting the best challengers out there. As far as you're concerned, that's Morales. Be a real champion. Do the right thing.

•The intrinsic flaw in day-before-the-fight weigh-ins reared its dangerous head again in the Jorge Arce-Agustin Luna WBC light flyweight title fight in Las Vegas. Although defending beltholder Arce came in at the division limit of 108 pounds the day before the fight, he was up to 121 on fight night. Luna was 112. The fact that neither of them were light flyweights is bad enough, but the nine-pound advantage for Arce turned what was a gimme defense at best into an obscenity.

•More and more readers are writing to complain about the hi-rise protective cups that an increasing number of fighters are wearing, and I'm in total agreement with those who feel it has to stop.

Oscar De La Hoya (vs. Fernando Vargas) was the most recent perpetrator, but far from the first. Michael Grant was an early wearer of this sort of body armor, and it wasn't long before Lewis followed suit. Johnny Tapia's protector was up around his armpits when he fought Barrera, and Kostya Tszyu's was riding high against Ben Tackie. These are just a few examples of a disturbing trend.

It is the commissions' responsibility to monitor the equipment boxers use, but if they fail to do their job, managers should refuse to allow their charges into the ring with opponents wearing oversized cups. If the belly button isn't showing, send the offender back to the dressing room for another protector. Do this a couple of times in high-profile fights, and the problem will disappear quicker than you can say "below the belt."

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

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The RING

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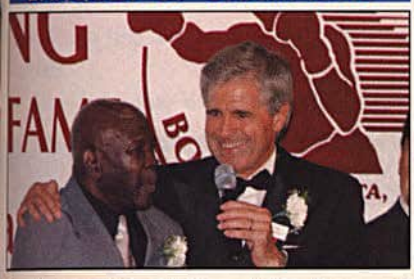


Reunion . . . Emile Griffith and Nino Benvenuti recall three memorable championship fights.

FIST CASTING

Everlasting . . . Fist cast by Jeff Fenech.

PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler waves to fans.

Hooray . . . Earnie Shavers shows off the stars and stripes.

CELEBRITY BOXING NIGHT

HECTOR CAMACHO

Fight Night . . . Popular boxers featured in action-packed bouts at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

MUSEUM GROUNDS

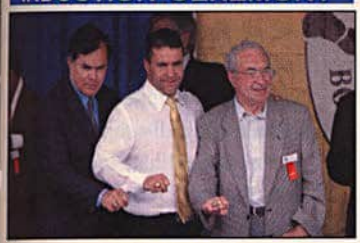
Star-Studded . . . Ruben Olivares signs a poster while Bert Sugar and Christy Martin square off for the fans.

5K RACE, FUN RUN

Finish Line . . . "Irish" Micky Ward in stride.

Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

INDUCTION CEREMONY



A Moment in Time . . . Pipino Cuevas, Jeff Fenech and Reg Gutteridge proudly display their Hall of Fame rings.

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GOLF TOURNAMENT

Chip . . . Gerry Cooney (l) chips onto 18th green while Sir Henry Cooper (r) is enroute to next tee.

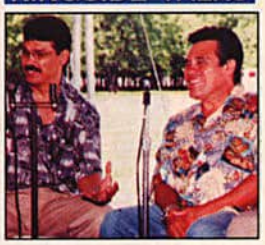
VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Stars . . . Boxers and fans enjoy VIP reception while Angelo Dundee receives red carpet welcome.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Christy Martin laces up her gloves and Bernard Hopkins hits the speed bag.

RINGSIDE TALKS



Reminiscing. . . Alexis Arguello (L) reunites with Ruben Olivares (R).

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ROUND ONE

LOU HANGS A LOSS ON HOPKINS

Anybody who saw Lou DiBella crying with joy following Bernard Hopkins' upset knockout o Felix Trinidad knows that he's not the sort of guy who hides his emotions. But DiBella was remar ably reserved in the immediate aftermath of his November victory over Hopkins in U.S. Distri Court.

PHOTO BY MARTY ROSENGARTEN

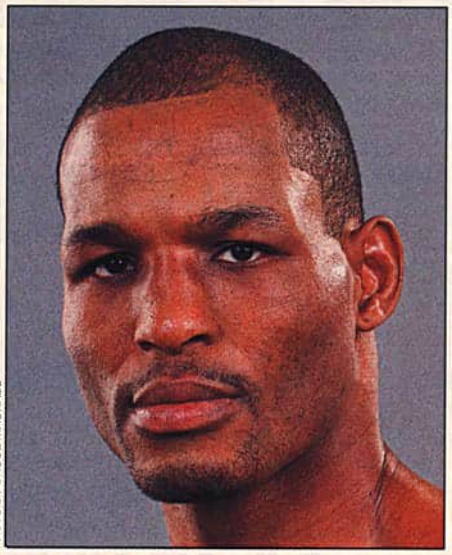


PHOTO BY BRUCE MACNABB

DiBella (top) toppled middleweight king Hopkins

"I feel vindicated, but it's not something I'm jumping up and down about said DiBella after being awarded $610,000 in his defamation suit against t world middleweight champion. "I knew I was telling the truth, and it's been horrible year as a result of these allegations, but I feel vindicated."

DiBella's libel suit stemmed from an interview Hopkins gav maxboxing.com columnist Steve Kim in which the fighter alleged th DiBella asked for and received a $50,000 bribe to put Hopkins on HBO-tel vised boxing cards while DiBella was still an executive at the networ DiBella, who left HBO in May 2000, denied Hopkins' allegation and sue him, and following a two-week trial in New York City, the jury ruled in h favor.

"It was an extraordinarily tough case to win because the jury had to co clude that Hopkins and his two lawyers had perjured themselves," DiBella lawyer, Judd Burstein, told the *New York Daily News*.

Burstein's claim was that Hopkins' lawyers fraudulently concealed ev dence by altering a time record of when DiBella allegedly solicited the brib The presiding judge, Denny Chin, said that it appeared that Hopkins' lawyer had "withheld evidence" and tried to "mislead the jury." There is now a possi bility that sanctions will be leveled against Hopkins' legal representatives.

Hopkins could have saved himself a lot of money had he agreed to a settle ment worked out prior to the trial in which DiBella would have received $170,000. But Hopkins wanted a gag order to be part of the deal, and when DiBella refused, the case went to trial.

At one time, Hopkins and DiBella were each other's greatest supporter DiBella was instrumental in helping Hopkins' career blossom after years o neglect, and after the knockout of Trinidad in September '01, DiBella was one of the first people Hopkins thanked for helping him reach the pinnacle o his career. Both have suffered professionally since the split.

"The only reason I'm not where I want to be today is Bernard Hopkins," DiBella told secondsout.com columnist Tom Hauser. "Bernard has poisoned the well for me with a lot of fighters."

Hopkins has only fought once since falling out with DiBella, and both HBO and Showtime have declined to broadcast his mooted title defense against little-known Morrade Hakkar. Moreover, a chance to fight Roy Jones fell through when Hopkins wanted more than the $6-million purse offered. He also faces a lawsuit from former trainer Bouie Fisher that has yet to come to trial.

VARGAS VACATION

We may never know whether Fernando Vargas was truly unaware that he had steroids in his system going into his fight with Oscar De La Hoya, but either way, the test came back positive, and that's a negative for Vargas. At a November 20 hearing, the Nevada State Athletic Commission flexed its own muscle and decided to fine Vargas $100,000 and suspend him for nine months.

Considering that Vargas will make somewhere between $8-million and $11-million for the De La Hoya fight once all the receipts have been totaled, the fine isn't exactly a backbreaker. And even the suspension isn't as severe as it sounds, because it's retroactive to the date of the fight—September 14—meaning Vargas will be eligible to fight on June 15, just a couple of months later than he'd planned on returning. Nevertheless, by pleading ignorance while still holding himself accountable, Vargas had hoped to get off lighter.

"I don't need to cheat to win," Vargas told the five-member commission panel during his two-hour hearing, insisting that an unidentified employee of his must have spiked his nutritional supplement Decavar with the anabolic steroid stanozolol. "Taking steroids is like cheating, and I'm sorry this happened. It wasn't my intention, but I take full responsibility because I'm the one who ultimately put the stuff into my body."

Mike Tyson, a friend of Vargas', spoke on his behalf, calling the 24-year-old junior middleweight "naive." The commission was relatively unmoved, voting 4-1 in favor of the penalties. Dr. Flip Homansky cast the lone dissenting vote.

"I'm a man. I take full responsibility," Vargas told the press after the decision was rendered. "The only thing is the layoff is definitely going to be hard."

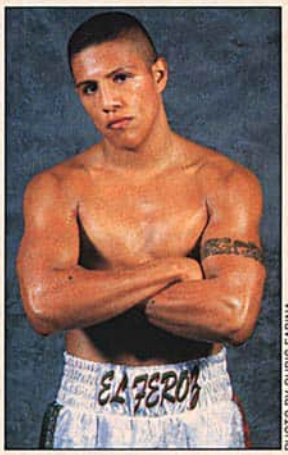


PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Vargas: Suspended until June

At the same time, it could be helpful. Coming off his second brutal knockout loss in a two-year span, an extended vacation may be the best thing for this sometimes overeager warrior.

JUDGING FOR DUMMIES

As boxing fans, we've all found ourselves wondering at one time or another what the heck a judge could have been thinking, scoring a fight the way he or she did. With the VHS and DVD release of *You Be The Boxing Judge*, an adaptation of the 1996 book of the same name by veteran ringside scorer Tom Kaczmarek, we can now understand exactly what a judge—or at least this one particular judge—thinks as he watches a fight. Unfortunately, most of the information revealed on this 2½-hour production will only be eye-opening to novice boxing fans. Those who have heard Harold Lederman discuss the finer points of scoring on HBO or who have already tried scoring bouts themselves will probably find Kaczmarek's insights to be little more than discussions of the obvious, making this a product with limited appeal to the boxing public.

The video is very professionally put together, with fight footage provided by Interbox and photos by veteran lensman Ray Bailey providing appealing graphic accompaniment. Kaczmarek, a former fighter who has scored more than 1,600 bouts over his 25 years as a judge, narrates, telling us first about the history of judging (not the world's most heart-pounding topic) and then explaining how to approach scoring a fight in a segment entitled "Judges' Training Camp." The instruction is dumbed down to the verge of being insulting, most notably when Kaczmarek explains that in the rounds system implemented before the 10-point must system came along, if Fighter A wins six rounds out of the 10 and Fighter B wins four, then Fighter A wins the fight, 6-4.

The video becomes more interesting when entire rounds of fights are shown with commentary by Kaczmarek, explaining how he's scoring it and why from one punch to the next. (There's an option on the DVD to watch with or without Kaczmarek's commentary; on the VHS, you only get Kaczmarek's commentary on the "Deluxe" version.) *You Be The Boxing Judge* provides a total of 16 different rounds the viewer can score along with, which can be an enjoyable exercise, though not all that different from watching on TV and comparing your card with that of the broadcasters or, on taped HBO replays of pay-per-view fights, the judges themselves.

The program ends with a 30-minute roundtable discussion on judging and other assorted boxing topics, featuring panelists Kaczmarek, referee Arthur Mercante Sr., judge Julie Lederman, and fighters Kevin Kelley, Lou Savarese, and Christy Martin. The conversation is fairly interesting, but no wild, impassioned arguments break out. A less civil insider's roundtable could have gone a long way toward making the tape more memorable.

Still, for fans just getting into boxing, or for pro judges and aspiring pro judges wishing to learn everything they possibly can about the craft, *You Be The Boxing Judge* may prove worth checking out. To order the VHS ($24.99), Deluxe VHS ($34.99), or DVD ($44.99), you can go online to www.tvboxingjudge.com or call 201-986-0902.

—Eric Raskin

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESU
11-8-02	O'Neil Bell KO 9 Arthur Wiliams	ESPN2	c	B	B-	C+
Down early, Bell hangs around long enough to stop Williams again						
11-8-02	Laila Ali KO 8 Valerie Mahfood	ESPN2	sm	C	C-	C+
What was Muhammad Ali's kid doing on television beating up George Chuvalo?						
11-9-02	Lamar Murphy D 10 Victoriano Sosa	PPV	l	B-	A-	B
If Murphy wasn't in a one- or two-point fight, we wouldn't recognize him						
11-9-02	**Paul Spadafora W 12 Dennis Holbaek**	**PPV**	**IBF l**	**A-**	**C+**	**C**
Go figure; Spadafora looked better against Floyd Mayweather than he did against Holbaek						
11-9-02	Jeff Lacy W 12 Ross Thompson	Show	sm	C+	B	C
Lacy passes good test in Thompson, and he didn't even have to spit on him						
11-9-02	Sharmba Mitchell W 10 Vince Phillips	Show	jw	B+	B+	C+
Hasn't anyone told Mitchell yet that there was a microphone in his corner when he quit against Tszyu?						
11-15-02	Jesus Chavez KO 6 Johnny Walker	Telef	jl	B	D+	C-
Chavez stays busy with win over outgunned Walker; where's the title shot?						
11-15-02	Yory Boy Campas KO 2 George Klinesmith	Telef	m	C	D-	C+
Anyone else think Campas against Shane Mosley might have been a little interesting?						
11-16-02	**Jorge Arce KO 3 Agustin Luna**	**PPV**	**WBC jfl**	**A-**	**D**	**C**
What would a Bob Arum pay-per-view card be without one disgusting mismatch?						
11-16-02	Dmitriy Salita KO 1 Ron Gladdin	PPV	jw	C	D+	C
Apparently we haven't reached our limit yet on promising junior welterweight prospects						
11-16-02	Guty Espadas W 12 Bones Adams	PPV	f	B+	A-	C
This wasn't nearly as bad as HBO's broadcasting team made it sound						
11-16-02	**Erik Morales W 12 Paulie Ayala**	**PPV**	**WBC f**	**A**	**B+**	**B**
Who was that guy whipping Ayala, and what has he done with Erik Morales?						
11-17-02	Virgil Hill W 12 Joey DeGrandis	FOXSN	c	C	D-	D+
Don't laugh; if DeGrandis were a light heavy a few years back, Hill would have defended against him two or three times						
11-22-02	Ivan Calderon W 12 Lee Sandoval	ESPN2	s	C+	C+	C-
Unless Calderon develops a punch, we're going to be seeing a lot of this						
11-22-02	Miguel Cotto KO 7 Ubaldo Hernandez	ESPN2	jw	B-	B	B-
Hernandez no softie; Cesar Bazan up next						
11-22-02	Hector Camacho Jr. KO 1 Freddie Ladd	Telem	w	C	D+	D
It's going to take more than this to make people forget, Hector						
11-23-02	Arturo Gatti W 10 Micky Ward	HBO	w	A-	A+	B+
All right, so this one wasn't so competitive; Gatti-Ward is still this generation's Zale-Graziano						
11-24-02	Clarence Vinson W 10 Idelfonso Martinez	ESPN	b	C+	C+	C-
Sure Vinson can fight; it doesn't mean we enjoy watching him						
11-24-02	Brian Viloria W 12 Alberto Rossel	ESPN	fl	B-	B-	C+
Viloria lucky to get decision in rematch; don't count on third go between these two						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

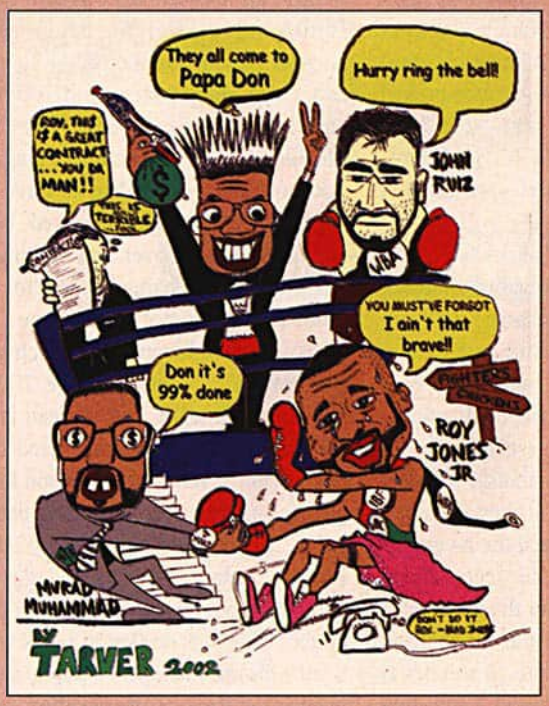
(World/Alphabet title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Telef—Telefutura; Telem—Telemundo

A PICTURE WORTH A THOUSAND INSULTS

Light heavyweight contender Antonio Tarver isn't bashful about bragging to anyone who will listen that he's "multifaceted talent-wise." He'll tell you that he's a 10-handicap golfer and a better basketball player than nemesis Roy Jones. Tarver also recently wrote a song called "Suspicious Mandatories," about Jones' penchant for fighting no-hope challengers instead of you know who. But it wasn't until mid-November that we discovered Tarver has yet another heretofore undiscovered talent.



Frustrated by his inability to goad Jones into a fight, Tarver, THE RING's number-one light heavyweight contender, dug out the art supplies, drew the accompanying cartoon, and e-mailed it to various media outlets.

"I've been saying a lot of things, but it seems like my comments have fallen on deaf ears," explained Tarver. "I felt compelled to make a bigger statement, and nothing is better than a picture. So I sat down and went to work on it.

"When I was young, I liked to color and I've read a lot of Marvel comics. I was fascinated by the Incredible Hulk, Spiderman, and things of that nature. It was easy for me to look at a cartoon and sketch it. I never really had a love for art, in that it was something I wanted to make a living at. It's just something I have a knack for."

While Tarver's cartoon didn't elicit a response from Jones, Reluctant Roy's promoter, Murad Muhammad, issued an indignant and somewhat mystifying statement accusing Tarver of insulting the Islamic religion.

"I didn't understand that part, but I understand how sensitive people can be when it comes down to religion," said Tarver. "I was man enough to step up and apologize to him personally. But the cartoon was totally just a joke. But Murad didn't challenge any of the facts. It's still unfortunate that the fighter some consider the best in the world, pound-for-pound, made it his job to avoid fighting me. So I rest my case."

So has the IBF. A week after Tarver's cartoon began stirring the light heavyweight stew, the IBF stripped Jones for failing to defend against the pugilistic Picasso. It is now expected that Tarver will be matched with Montell Griffin for the vacant belt.

Besides pushing his own agenda in a creative way, Tarver is also using his artistic ability to help raise funds for Gerald McClellan, the former WBC middleweight titleholder who suffered crippling injuries in his 1995 bout with Nigel Benn. For a minimum donation of $25 to The Gerald McClellan Fund (c/o Fifth Third Bank, P.O. Box 660, Freeport, IL 61032), boxing fans can receive an autographed 8 x 10 reprint of Tarver's cartoon.

"I think this whole situation with Roy and John Ruiz is a joke, but what happened to Gerald is no laughing matter," said Tarver. "When it comes down to it, what happened to Gerald McClellan can happen to any of us."

—Nigel Collins

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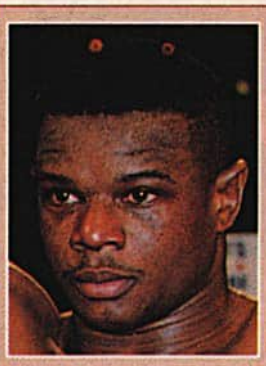
OUTSIDE THE ROPES



Simon: May face homicide charge

After a head-on automobile accident in his native Namibia in late-November, top middleweight contender **Harry Simon** has two broken legs and a broken arm—and those may be the least of his problems. Three Belgian tourists were killed in the accident (including a 22-month-old child) and four others were hospitalized (two in critical condition), and Simon may be charged with culpable homicide. Police said Simon was behind the wheel of his Mercedes when it crossed to the wrong side of the road and collided with the Belgians' van, and evidence suggests that alcohol may have played a role. Simon was involved in another accident in April '01 that saw two people killed, but it was not clear whether Simon was the driver in that incident, and the investigation stalled when blood samples taken from the scene disappeared. The outlook appears much more bleak for the undefeated fighter this time around … In addition to that outside-the-ring tragedy, there was an inside-the-ring fatality in late-November as well. Argentine junior featherweight **Jorge Daniel Espindola** lost a 12-round decision to countryman **Fabio Oliva** in Catamarca, Argentina, and died in the hospital a little more than 24 hours later. Oliva hurt Espindola with a series of punches late in the 12th round, and Espindola collapsed just as the bell was sounding. Espindola went into a coma, and an operation to remove a blood clot on his brain could not prevent his passing. Espindola, 25, had a record of 11-5-4 (4) and briefly held the Argentine bantamweight title … Junior middleweight contender **Kassim Ouma** was shot in the stomach in an early morning drive-by shooting in West Palm Beach, Florida, in early-December. Ouma was hospitalized and had to have a portion of his intestine removed, but is expected to recover and continue with his boxing career. Look for a more detailed report next issue … Heavyweight/cruiserweight **Michael Bennett**, a co-captain of the 2000 U.S. Olympic team, was charged in mid-November with unlawful possession of an unregistered firearm. Bennett, who previously spent seven years in prison for armed robbery, was scheduled for a December court date that could see him sent back to jail … Some good news: Early returns on the **Erik Morales-Paulie Ayala** pay-per-view suggest that it registered roughly 130,000 buys, much higher than expected and approximately double what was needed to break even … **George Chemeres**, a Seattle-based manager, trainer, and promoter best known for preparing **Pete Rademacher** when he challenged **Floyd Patterson** for the world heavyweight title in his pro debut, died of lung cancer in mid-November at the age of 87. Chemeres also worked with the likes of light heavyweight **Eddie Cotton**, heavyweight **Harry "Kid" Matthews**, and lightweight titlist **Greg Haugen**. "George was a very, very well-respected man in this area," Haugen told *The Seattle Times*. "Probably one of the last great boxing teachers has died."

Bennett: Could be back behind bars

THE PUNCHLINES

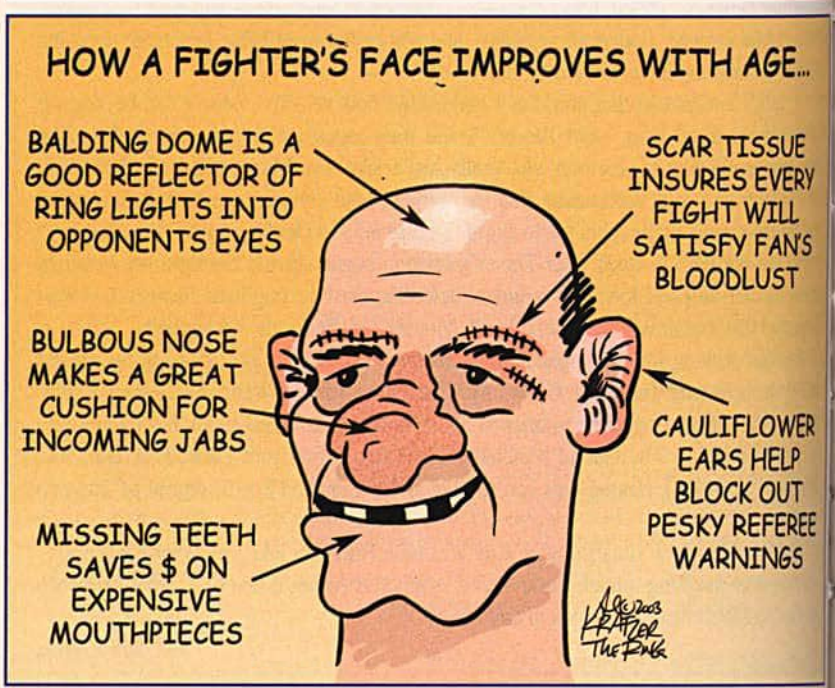
"It has more padding than a Wonderbra."

—British promoter John Hyland, on the record of undefeated junior welterweight Ricky Hatton

"I'm glad my enemies come out and attack me, because that way I know who to invite for tea."

—Heavyweight prospect Audley Harrison, on the criticism he's received in the British press

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



The RING
"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
   Middleweight
2. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
3. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Featherweight
4. **VERNON FORREST**
   Welterweight
5. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Junior Middleweight
6. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Junior Welterweight
7. **ERIK MORALES**
   Featherweight
8. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER**
   Lightweight
9. **LENNOX LEWIS**
   Heavyweight
10. **SHANE MOSLEY**
    Junior Middleweight

(For period ended December 1, 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Vitali Klitschko (10th last issue) moves to eighth following his kayo of Larry Donald. Klitschko's advancement causes Kirk Johnson (eighth last issue) and Mike Tyson (ninth last issue) to drop to ninth and 10th, respectively.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: Johnny Nelson falls from second to fifth following his controversial draw with Guillermo Jones, who is now aboard at number six. Nelson's demotion pushes Jean-Marc Mormeck (third last issue), Wayne Braithwaite (formerly fourth), and James Toney (fifth last issue) up one position each. The shakeup causes all the fighters below Jones to drop one spot, with the exception of O'Neil Bell, whose win over Arthur Williams allows him to leapfrog Ezra Sellers and remain at number seven. Sellers falls from sixth to eighth as a result. Jorge Castro (10th last issue) departs to make room for Jones.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Although Harry Simon retains the number-one spot for now, his ranking could be in jeopardy. He was involved in an automobile accident in his native Namibia, suffering a broken arm and two broken legs. While it's not clear whether or not his injuries will prevent him from boxing again, Simon could also face criminal charges, as three people were killed in the accident.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Sixth-ranked Kassim Ouma was shot in the stomach during a drive-by shooting in West Palm Beach, Florida, in early-December, but keeps his current ranking for the time-being.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Arturo Gatti jumps from sixth to third on the strength of his dominant victory over Micky Ward, who slips from fourth to seventh. Gatti's advancement also pushes down DeMarcus Corley from third to fourth, while Ward's decline allows Jesse James Leija to move from seventh to sixth.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No changes, but Erik Morales reinforced his number-one status with an impressive decision over Paulie Ayala.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Despite his loss to Morales at featherweight, Paulie Ayala remains THE RING's junior featherweight champion for now. If Ayala decides to continue campaigning at 126 pounds, the 122-pound title will be declared vacant. Bones Adams (third last issue) exits after a lackluster loss to Guty Espadas at featherweight. This elevates everybody below one position and makes room for Yoddamrong Sithyodthong to return at number 10.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No changes.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No changes.

POUND-FOR-POUND: Morales' commanding victory over Ayala lifts him from ninth to seventh. This forces Floyd Mayweather (seventh last issue) and Lennox Lewis (eighth last issue) down one place each to eighth and ninth, respectively. ■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended December 1, 2002

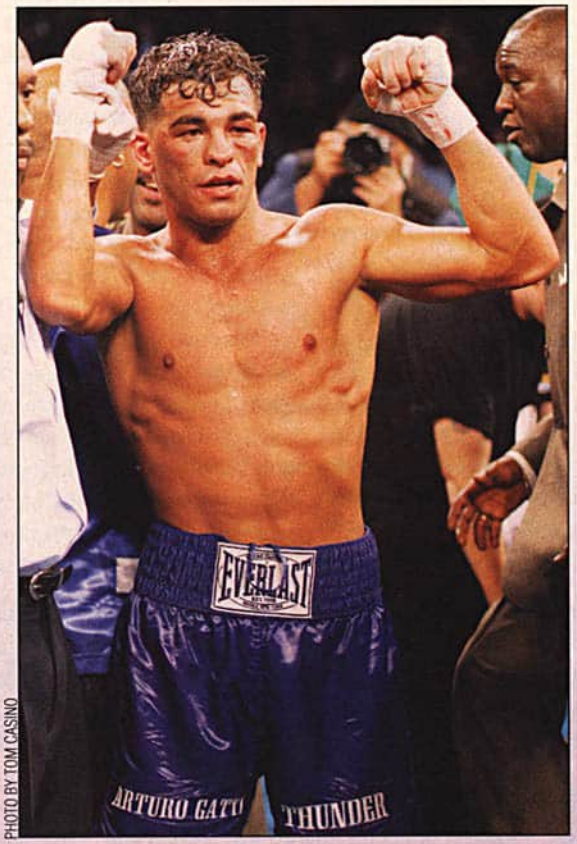


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Arturo Gatti advanced three spots at junior welter by dominating Micky Ward in their rematch

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled in one of two ways: by unifying all three alphabet titles in a division; or by winning a box-off between THE RING'S number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

Ratings By The Editors
Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: LENNOX LEWIS
England 40-2-1 (31)

1. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 39-1 (36)
2. **CHRIS BYRD**
Flint, MI 35-2 (20)
3. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
Fairburn, GA 38-5-2 (25)
4. **DAVID TUA**
New Zealand 42-3 (37)
5. **JOHN RUIZ**
Chelsea, MA 38-4-1 (27)
6. **JAMEEL McCLINE**
Port Jefferson, NY 28-2-3 (16)
7. **HASIM RAHMAN**
Baltimore, MD 35-4 (29)
8. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 32-1 (31)
9. **KIRK JOHNSON**
Canada 32-1-1 (23)
10. **MIKE TYSON**
Catskill, NY 49-4 (43)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: OSCAR DE LA HOYA
Los Angeles, CA 35-2 (28)

1. **WINKY WRIGHT**
St. Petersburg, FL 44-3 (25)
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS**
Oxnard, CA 22-2 (20)
3. **JAVIER CASTILLEJO**
Spain 54-5 (36)
4. **DANIEL SANTOS**
Puerto Rico 26-2-1 (20)
5. **SHANE MOSLEY**
Pomona, CA 38-2 (35)
6. **KASSIM OUMA**
W. Palm Beach, FL 17-1-1 (12)
7. **BRONCO McKART**
Monroe, MI 45-4 (29)
8. **ALEX BUNEMA**
Dallas, TX 20-3-2 (12)
9. **VERNO PHILLIPS**
Aurora, CO 33-8-1 (18)
10. **SANTIAGO SAMANIEGO**
Panama 36-6-1 (29)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA
Mexico 56-3 (39)

1. **ERIK MORALES**
Mexico 42-1 (31)
2. **NASEEM HAMED**
England 36-1 (31)
3. **MANUEL MEDINA**
Mexico 60-12 (27)
4. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 39-2 (31)
5. **DERRICK GAINER**
Pensacola, FL 38-5-1 (24)
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
Albuquerque, NM 52-3-2 (28)
7. **FRANKIE TOLEDO**
Paterson, NJ 42-6-1 (17)
8. **SCOTT HARRISON**
Scotland 18-1-1 (9)
9. **LEHLO LEDWABA**
South Africa 33-2-1 (22)
10. **WILLIAM ABELYAN**
Glendale, CA 21-4-1 (11)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: PAULIE AYALA
Ft. Worth, TX 34-2 (12)

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines 35-2-1 (26)
2. **OSCAR LARIOS**
Mexico 46-3-1 (33)
3. **SALIM MEDJKOUNE**
France 40-3-1 (21)
4. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
Mexico 30-2-2 (21)
5. **ISRAEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico 33-3 (24)
6. **WILLIE JORRIN**
Sacramento, CA 28-1-1 (12)
7. **JOSE LUIS VALBUENA**
Venezuela 21-2-1 (12)
8. **JOAN GUZMAN**
Dominican Republic 18-0 (14)
9. **OSAMU SATO**
Japan 26-2-2 (15)
10. **YODDAMRONG SITHYODTHONG**
Thailand 31-1-1 (14)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
Cincinnati, OH 25-0-1 (22)
2. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM**
Thailand 39-1-1 (28)
3. **JOHNNY BREDAHL**
Denmark 53-2 (26)
4. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 28-3 (26)
5. **EIDY MOYA**
Venezuela 15-2 (8)
6. **ADAN VARGAS**
Mexico 37-4-1 (23)
7. **CRUZ CARBAJAL**
Mexico 22-11-1 (18)
8. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan 22-3-2 (13)
9. **PETE FRISSINA**
Tarpon Springs, FL 26-3-1 (15)
10. **SILENCE MABUZA**
South Africa 13-0 (12)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **VASSILIY JIROV** Kazakhstan 31-0 (27)
2. **JEAN-MARC MORMECK** France 28-2 (20)
3. **WAYNE BRAITHWAITE** Guyana 18-0 (15)
4. **JAMES TONEY** Ann Arbor, MI 65-4-2 (42)
5. **JOHNNY NELSON** England 42-12-2 (28)
6. **GUILLERMO JONES** Panama 29-2-2 (22)
7. **O'NEIL BELL** Atlanta, GA 19-1-1 (18)
8. **EZRA SELLERS** Washington, D.C. 25-5 (23)
9. **VIRGIL HILL** Bismarck, ND 48-4 (23)
10. **ALEXANDRE GUROV** Ukraine 32-3-1 (27)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: ROY JONES Pensacola, FL 47-1 (38)

1. **ANTONIO TARVER** Orlando, FL 20-1 (17)
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** Germany 47-0 (37)
3. **ERIC HARDING** Philadephia, PA 21-2-1 (7)
4. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** Chicago, IL 44-3 (29)
5. **REGGIE JOHNSON** Houston, TX 42-7-1 (24)
6. **BRUNO GIRARD** France 42-2-2 (7)
7. **JULIO GONZALEZ** Huntington Beach, CA 31-1 (21)
8. **DAVID TELESCO** Port Chester, NY 26-3 (21)
9. **LOU DEL VALLE** Bronx, NY 31-3-1 (21)
10. **GEORGE JONES** Paterson, NJ 18-2 (13)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOE CALZAGHE** Wales 34-0 (27)
2. **SVEN OTTKE** Germany 29-0 (6)
3. **ANTWUN ECHOLS** Davenport, IA 29-4-1 (26)
4. **ERIC LUCAS** Canada 36-4-3 (13)
5. **BYRON MITCHELL** Ozark, AL 25-1-1 (18)
6. **CHARLES BREWER** Philadelphia, PA 38-9 (27)
7. **MADS LARSEN** Denmark 43-1 (36)
8. **MANUEL SIACA** Puerto Rico 16-4 (15)
9. **ANTHONY MUNDINE** Australia 16-1 (13)
10. **MARKUS BEYER** Germany 26-1 (11)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS Philadelphia, PA 41-2-1 (30)

1. **HARRY SIMON** Namibia 23-0 (17)
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY** Washington, D.C. 34-2-1 (25)
3. **HOWARD EASTMAN** England 33-1 (30)
4. **ANTONIO PERUGINO** Italy 22-0 (7)
5. **ROBERT ALLEN** Atlanta, GA 33-4 (24)
6. **TITO MENDOZA** Panama 27-4 (20)
7. **SERGEY TATEVOSYAN** Russia 16-3 (12)
8. **HASSINE CHERIFI** France 33-6-1 (20)
9. **RODNEY JONES** Lafayette, LA 27-3 (17)
10. **ERLAND BETARE** France 35-7-2 (16)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: VERNON FORREST Atlanta, GA 35-0 (26)

1. **RICARDO MAYORGA** Nicaragua 24-3-1 (22)
2. **ANTONIO MARGARITO** Mexico 27-3 (18)
3. **THOMAS DAMGAARD** Denmark 31-0 (25)
4. **ANDREW LEWIS** Guyana 22-1-1 (20)
5. **ANTONIO DIAZ** Coachella, CA 37-4 (26)
6. **MANUEL GOMEZ** Mexico 21-10 (16)
7. **CORY SPINKS** St. Louis, MO 30-2 (11)
8. **MICHELE PICCIRILLO** Italy 37-1 (23)
9. **JAWAID KHALIQ** England 20-1-1 (12)
10. **DANNY PEREZ** El Cajon, CA 27-3 (17)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: KOSTYA TSZYU Australia 29-1-1 (23)

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL** Washington, D.C. 50-3 (29)
2. **ZAB JUDAH** Brooklyn, NY 28-1 (21)
3. **ARTURO GATTI** Jersey City, NJ 35-6 (28)
4. **DeMARCUS CORLEY** Washington, D.C. 27-1-1 (16)
5. **VIVIAN HARRIS** Brooklyn, NY 22-1-1 (16)
6. **JESSE JAMES LEIJA** San Antonio, TX 43-5-2 (17)
7. **MICKY WARD** Lowell, MA 38-12 (27)
8. **OKTAY URKAL** Germany 31-1 (10)
9. **BEN TACKIE** Ghana 24-3 (15)
10. **DIOBELYS HURTADO** Miami, FL 35-3-1 (23)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: FLOYD MAYWEATHER Grand Rapids, MI 28-0 (20)

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO** Mexico 46-5-1 (42)
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON** Denver, CO 34-2-1 (16)
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA** Pittsburgh, PA 36-0 (14)
4. **LEONARD DORIN** Canada 21-0 (7)
5. **JUAN LAZCANO** El Paso, TX 31-2-1 (24)
6. **ANGEL MANFREDY** Gary, IN 40-6-1 (29)
7. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN** Uzbekistan 35-0 (22)
8. **RAUL BALBI** France 48-6-1 (33)
9. **ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ** Mexico 48-5-1 (33)
10. **COLIN DUNNE** England 38-1 (26)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ACELINO FREITAS** Brazil 32-0 (29)
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR** Miami, FL 27-1 (17)
3. **JESUS CHAVEZ** Mexico 38-2 (27)
4. **STEVE FORBES** Las Vegas, NV 21-1 (5)
5. **YODSANAN NANTHACHAI** Thailand 36-2-1 (33)
6. **PHILLIP NDOU** South Africa 29-1 (28)
7. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSAK** Thailand 39-1 (23)
8. **CASSIUS BALOYI** South Africa 28-1 (16)
9. **CARLOS HERNANDEZ** Bellflower, CA 37-3-1 (23)
10. **NATE CAMPBELL** Jacksonville, FL 23-0 (21)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA** North Korea 27-2-1 (8)
2. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ** Venezuela 23-0 (23)
3. **FERNANDO MONTIEL** Mexico 24-0-1 (18)
4. **FELIX MACHADO** Venezuela 22-3-1 (11)
5. **GERRY PENALOSA** Philippines 46-4-2 (31)
6. **MARTIN CASTILLO** Mexico 22-1 (14)
7. **JESUS ROJAS** Venezuela 35-9-3 (19)
8. **MAURICIO PASTRANA** Colombia 28-3-1 (18)
9. **IN JOO CHO** Korea 18-2 (7)
10. **LUIS BOLANO** Colombia 36-0 (28)

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ERIC MOREL** Madison, WI 32-0 (18)
2. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM** Thailand 45-2 (25)
3. **IRENE PACHECO** Colombia 27-0 (20)
4. **MZUKISI SIKALI** South Africa 27-4-2 (16)
5. **HAWK MAKEPULA** South Africa 20-2 (13)
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT** Thailand 42-1 (14)
7. **MALCOLM TUNACAO** Philippines 13-1-2 (9)
8. **PETER CULSHAW** England 23-1-1 (12)
9. **GERSON GUERRERO** Mexico 25-4 (19)
10. **OMAR NARVAEZ** Argentina 12-0-1 (7)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ** Nicaragua 31-2-1 (20)
2. **JORGE ARCE** Mexico 31-3-1 (23)
3. **BEBIS MENDOZA** Colombia 28-1 (23)
4. **PICHIT SRIWAT** Thailand 25-2 (12)
5. **NELSON DIEPPA** Puerto Rico 19-2-2 (11)
6. **YOSAM CHOI** South Korea 24-2 (13)
7. **HIDENOBU HONDA** Japan 24-1 (12)
8. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO** Mexico 66-8-4 (30)
9. **ZOLANI PETELO** South Africa 17-3-2 (9)
10. **WENDYL JANIOLA** Philippines 11-0 (3)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOSE AGUIRRE** Mexico 28-1-1 (17)
2. **MIGUEL BARRERA** Colombia 19-0-2 (11)
3. **ROBERTO LEYVA** Mexico 21-1-1 (18)
4. **CHANA PORPAOIN** Thailand 48-2-2 (17)
5. **NOEL ARAMBULET** Venezuela 18-2-1 (10)
6. **KEITARO HOSHINO** Japan 22-8 (5)
7. **JOMA GAMBOA** Philippines 32-7-2 (22)
8. **DANIEL REYES** Colombia 28-1 (22)
9. **KERMIN GUARDIA** Colombia 33-2 (20)
10. **JUAN PALACIOS** Nicaragua 10-2 (8)

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

REQUIEM FOR A HEAVY WAIT

Don King holds press conferences that last so long, the fighters whose bout he's hyping sometimes go from being in their prime to being over the hill before he's done talking. He stages fight cards that end so late, the ringside cocktail waitresses have stopped bringing drinks and begun taking breakfast orders. King's a man who answers true/false questions with three-page essays and starts conversations like this: "Well, to make a short story long ..." So it's little wonder that his current heavyweight elimination tournament reflects his belief that the shortest distance between two points is a figure eight.

The advantage boxing has over just about every other sport is its freedom to create a Super Bowl, seventh game of the World Series, or Wimbledon final whenever it chooses. No lengthy regular seasons, postseasons, qualifying rounds, AP polls, brackets, or seedings are required, just two signatures on a contract and an arena with an open date. With this latest silly idea of his, however, King is trying to turn the heavyweight division into the National Hockey League playoffs.

As we went to press, Chris Byrd, he of the punch that lands with all the oomph of a paper airplane hitting a window curtain, was preparing to square off with Evander Holyfield, an ex-champ who's so old, his prefight physical ought to include a mandatory test for Alzheimer's disease. The guy who emerged from that meagerly awaited showdown for the vacant IBF crown was then scheduled to meet the winner of the other semifinal: a March 1 matchup of WBA heavyweight

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

Ruiz, Holyfield, Lewis, and Byrd join King and trainer Don Turner at press conference

ing John Ruiz and light heavyweight champion Roy Jones. And the eventual tournament winner would most likely be rewarded with a shot at *real* heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis. At least, that's the plan.

It doesn't even sound good on paper, so imagine how bad it is in reality. For starters, the real impetus for this snore-nament isn't creating a worthy challenger for Lewis. It's enabling King to gain more power in boxing's most important division. The promoter reportedly paid Lewis (who wasn't exactly begging for a fight with Byrd, a mandatory contender whose speed and head movement can make anyone look bad) a million bucks and gave him a Land Rover in exchange for his abdicating the IBF throne. If Ruiz, whom King has under contract, beats Jones, DK will control two-thirds of the alphabet crown.

All of that political stuff wouldn't matter if the matchups were great, but that's not the case, either. At the start of the tourney, we were faced with these possibilities for the final: Holyfield-Ruiz IV (enough already), Byrd-Ruiz (a clinch-a-thon), Byrd-Jones (imagine a fight in which nobody hit anybody), and Holyfield-Jones (battle of the Olympic robbery victims). Ali vs. Frazier vs. Foreman vs. Norton it ain't.

Before he had even landed his first punch, elbow, or headbutt of the tourney, Holyfield declared that any loss he might suffer along the way wasn't going to send him into retirement. "I want to leave as the undisputed champion," he said. What "The Real Deal" failed to mention is that his brain cells may not be as willing to stick around as the rest of him is. Meanwhile, if Holyfield fighting too many more heavyweight bouts is a problem, the opposite is true of Jones. Should he defeat Ruiz, King's whole tournament structure might collapse if Jones, who isn't under contract to the promoter beyond the Ruiz bout, chooses to drop back down in weight. Jones, after all, has always spoken of his assault on the heavyweight division as a one-shot challenge and not a long-term strategy. And even if Jones did hang around long enough to win the tourney, does *anyone* believe he'd ever go up against the 245-pound Lewis?

Speaking of Lewis, he must have somehow convinced a whole bunch of people that his birth certificate is inaccurate and that he's really not the 37-year-old we think he is. At a time when he should be squaring off with Wladimir Klitschko, he is choosing to instead tune up on Vitali Klitschko first. Wladimir will come soon thereafter, and then, we presume, the winner of the King tourney. And after that? Lewis will be admitted to the Sunnyvale Rest Home, handed his glass of prune juice, and informed that bingo is at 7 p.m.

What's with all this stalling and wasting time? Byrd is deserving of a title shot, but if Lewis has developed an allergy to him, then the big guy should be defending against Wladimir Klitschko immediately, and Ruiz right after that. Lewis' 2003 schedule and King's tourney simply serve to make us wait even more impatiently for the few intriguing Lewis fights that are still out there.

What makes this whole farce of a tournament even worse is that, incredibly, Lewis is giving it his ringing endorsement. That's right. At a time when he should be pounding his chest and declaring that he's the only true heavyweight king, here he is sitting on the dais at the press conference and agreeing to provide color commentary for the paper-title bouts! Sure, it's a chance for the Briton to make a buck, but can't a guy who's already a multimillionaire put pride and principle ahead of a paycheck and avoid cheapening the status he has worked so hard to achieve?

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

Lewis cheapened the title he fought so hard to win by endorsing King's tournament

One of the other unfortunate things about King's latest consumer unfriendly offering is that it's inspiring other nutty ideas. Oscar De La Hoya now envisions a 154-pound tournament, with the winner fighting him. He wants to pick four combatants from a pool that includes Vernon Forrest, Shane Mosley, Fernando Vargas, Winky Wright, Daniel Santos, and Javier Castillejo. (By the way, Golden Boy Promotions, De La Hoya's company, would stage the bouts. So it's no wonder why Oscar is keen on the idea *and* why he gets a bye in the first two rounds.) But that, too, is a titanic waste of time. Hey, Oscar, you want Forrest's scalp? Just make a deal with his camp and fight him. We shouldn't have to endure Forrest-Mosley III to get Forrest-De La Hoya I.

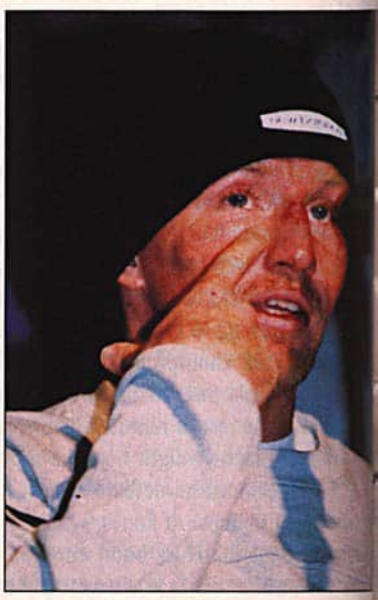
This isn't the PGA. We don't need one tournament after another. Especially not after listening to King hype his—and with a straight face no less. You do have to hand it to the guy with the funny hair, though. Only he can call something the World Heavyweight Championship Series and not have the real heavyweight champion compete in it. And if you think the official name of the tournament is silly, get a load of the tag line for it: "Hard Road to Glory ... We Will Not Tire."

Speak for yourselves, fellas. Speak for yourselves. ■

CAMERA CLICKS

PHOTO BY RICK GUZMAN

The roles of trainers within boxers' camps are so specialized now, Fernando Vargas had his own flexing coach for his fight with Oscar De La Hoya. In actuality, that's Vargas' then-conditioning coach, John Philbin, showing "El Feroz" the right way to flex six days prior to the fight.



How badly was Micky Ward's equilibriu thrown off when he had his eardrum busted his rematch with Arturo Gatti? This is a pictu of him trying to touch his finger to his nose, that gives you any idea.

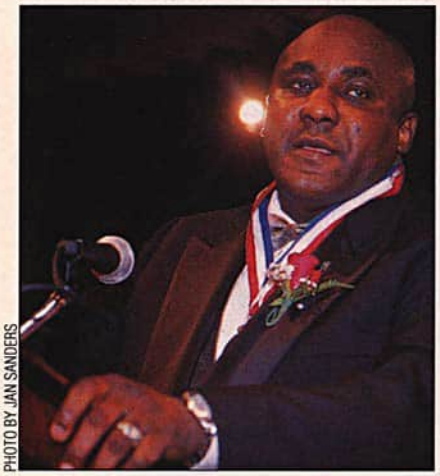


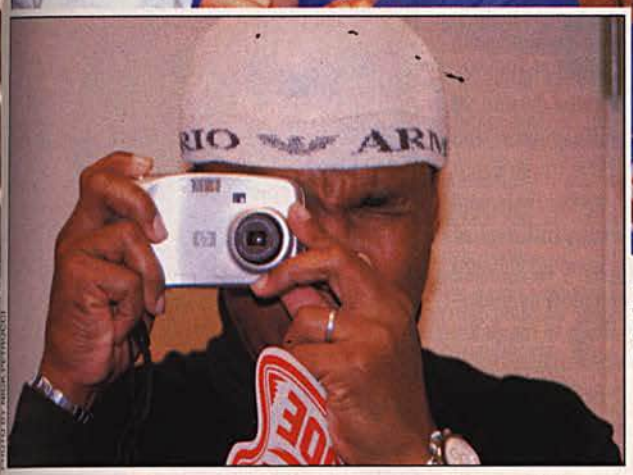
PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

More than just "The Bodysnatcher," Mike McCallum snatched a medal and a spot at the podium at the recent World Boxing Hall of Fame induction ceremony. McCallum also snatched major titles at junior middleweight, middleweight, and light heavyweight during his outstanding 16-year career.

The next time someone tries to tell you boxing is a dying sport, show them this picture. A crowd of 12,238 sold out the Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward rematch at Atlantic City's Convention Hall more than a week prior to the fight, and looking back, maybe it wasn't a punch that ruptured Ward's eardrum but rather the noise created by the fervent crowd.

PHOTO BY ED MULHOLLAND

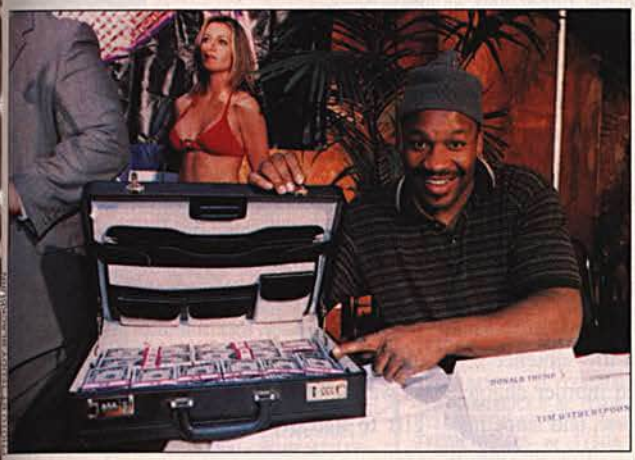
Apparently Buckwheat didn't arrive in time to get in on this publicity shot for the upcoming movie The Little Rascals Meet Arturo Gatti. *The Rascals have reportedly agreed to wear their Team Gatti warm-up suits in all future films and TV appearances.*



If a boxer can also be a promoter, then we suppose a Camera Clickee can also be a Camera Clicker. Sugar Ray Leonard, who seems to be doing well with his promotional company, may also have a future as a photographer. He certainly has found success on the other side of the camera, where his photogenic smile helped turn him into one of the biggest sports stars of his era.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

In order to beat the British, you need to drink like the British. World light heavyweight champion Willie Pastrano, preparing for his November 1964 title defense against England's Terry Downes, joined trainer Willie Gross for tea time. When it was tee-off time, Pastrano did just that, stopping Downes in 11 rounds.



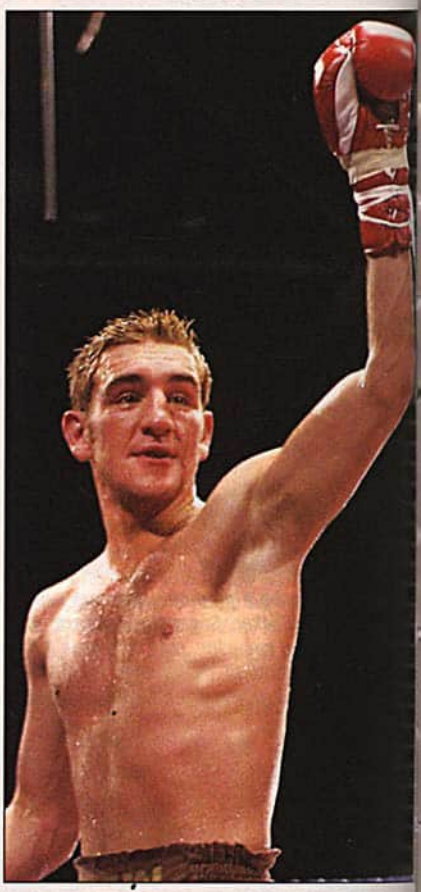
Show me the money: Unfortunately for Tim Witherspoon, this was as close as the former heavyweight titleholder got to the $100,000 at stake in Cedric Kushner's "Fistful Of Dollars" tournament. Witherspoon, who was bounced in the first round by little-known Israel Garcia, made only $5,000 for his efforts. And he didn't even get a nice briefcase to take it home in.

NEW FACES

ALEX ARTHUR

Junior Lightweight

By Brian Doogan



PRO RECORD

2000		
Nov. 25	Richmond Asante, Wythenshawe, England	KO 1
2001		
Feb. 10	Eddie Nevins, Widnes, Eng	KO 1
March 26	Woody Greenway, London	KO 2
April 28	Dafydd Carlin, Cardiff, Wales	W 4
July 21	Rakhim Mingaleev, Sheffield, Eng	W 4
Sept. 15	Dimitri Gorodetsky, Manchester, Eng	KO 1
Oct. 27	Alexei Slyachin, Manchester	KO 1
Nov. 17	Laszlo Bognar, Glasgow, Scotland	KO 3
2002		
Jan. 19	Vladimir Borov, London	KO 2
March 11	Darius Snarski, Glasgow	KO 10
June 8	Nikolai Eremeev, Glasgow	KO 5
Aug. 17	Pavel Potopko, Cardiff	KO 1
Oct. 17	Steve Conway, Glasgow	KO 4

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
13	13	0	0	11

The defining moment in the life of Alex Arthur, British super featherweight champion and tipped by Ken Buchanan to follow in his footsteps as a world champion, was grisly, traumatic, and totally devoid of romance. Edinburgh, Scotland's vibrant and enchanting capital city, can be a tough environment away from its castle, its festivals, and the other attractions that draw in millions of tourists annually. The Arthurs were acquainted with the hard side. Alex Sr. mixed in its underworld. Something bad was waiting to happen.

Engaging, articulate, and worldly-wise beyond his 24 years, Arthur sat in the locker room of the Phoenix Gym in Glasgow where he trains as he told the story.

"My dad was a criminal. He led a terrible life. He was a drinker and a streetfighter. He was caught up in a life that was only headed one way," Arthur recollected. "A huge disagreement one day between my father and a group of men resulted in my dad and another man facing off to resolve the problem. A knife was pulled. The man tried physically to attack my dad with the knife, but my dad managed to get the better of him and turned the thing and took it from there. It was a really nasty accident.

"The guy was on a life support machine for weeks. We didn't think he was going to live, and my dad was just waiting in prison to find out if he was going to do a life sentence for murder or face an attempted murder charge. Thankfully, it wasn't the worst, and since my father's come out of prison, after serving a three-year sentence, his life has just been so straight. But it meant I was able to start up my career in boxing because my dad wasn't there to prevent me.

"He was wary, you see, of me getting caught up in the same circles he mixed in. He knew a few boxers who were bad livers. He thought I would turn out the same way and he was religiously against me putting on the gloves. But I'm dedicated and I'm a Christian as well, and I believe God has given me this gift to use properly, and that's what I'm doing."

As an accomplished amateur, Arthur won gold in the Commonwealth Games in 1998 in Kuala Lumpur. Through 13 fights as a profes-

(Continued on page 6)

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- Pep vs Saddler Fight
- Marciano's KOs Walcott
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- Frazier upsets Ali
- Graziano - Zale classic
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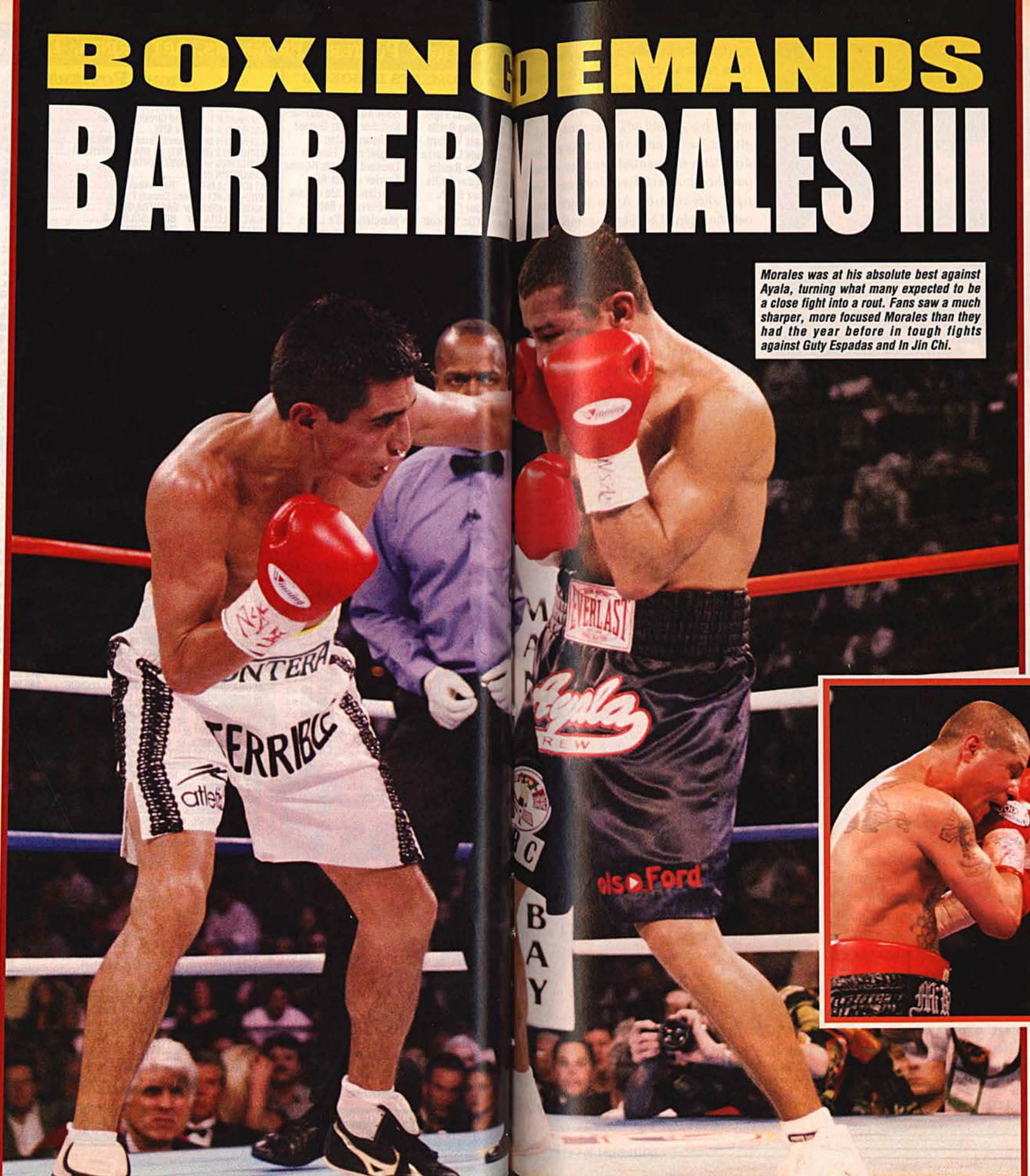
Now That Tapia And Ayala Are Out Of The Way ...

BOXING DEMANDS BARRERA/MORALES III



Morales was at his absolute best against Ayala, turning what many expected to be a close fight into a rout. Fans saw a much sharper, more focused Morales than they had the year before in tough fights against Guty Espadas and In Jin Chi.

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

By Kevin Iole

From Erik Morales to Marco Antonio Barrera to Naseem Hamed to Manuel Medina to Juan Manuel Marquez to Derrick Gainer to Johnny Tapia, there is a quality and depth in the featherweight division that hasn't been there in a long time. Yet Morales' effort against Paulie Ayala on November 16 at Mandalay Bay showed that, even with all that quality and depth, there is a clear division among the featherweights: You have Barrera and Morales, and then you have everyone else.

For consistent excitement, though, you have Morales, and then you have everyone else. Even when he clearly outclasses his opponent, Morales somehow finds a way to make it fun to watch. No one who saw his first fight with Barrera will likely ever forget it. His second fight with Barrera was a lackluster bout when judged by the standard of their first meeting, but on its own, it will still be remembered as one of the better fights of 2002. And Morales has also treated fans to entertaining tussles with the likes of Wayne McCullough, In Jin Chi, Junior Jones, and Daniel Zaragoza.

Still, Morales took something of a low profile with him into the ring when he met Ayala. Oh, Morales is revered in his native Mexico all right, and the sport's hardcore fans adore him, but he hasn't caught on widespread in the U.S. Whether it's his inability to speak English or his tendency to keep his thoughts and emotions to himself, Morales hasn't quite clicked with American fans.

"It's really a shame, too, because Morales is a guy of the people," his manager, Fernando Beltran, said. "He fights the fights the people want and he fights the way the people want. Who else does that?"

Precious few, to be sure, though an inordinate number of those who do these days happen to reside in the featherweight division. Nevertheless, as good as the Gainers and Medinas and Hameds are, Morales is clearly the number-one contender to world champ Barrera—and based on his controversial loss to Barrera and magnificent outing against Ayala, he may in fact be the best in the world at 126 pounds.

"Morales has a lot of ability and a lot of skills that people don't know about," said veteran trainer Floyd Mayweather Sr., who briefly worked Morales' corner in 2001. "He's not what I think he can be because he takes too many punches because that's

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Two weeks before Morales-Ayala, Marco Antonio Barrera was similarly dominant against Johnny Tapia, winning a wide decision. A third match between rivals Morales and Barrera is the ultimate fight in a featherweight division overflowing with great matchups.

Morales-Ayala was at times a give-and-take affair, but unfortunately for Paulie, Morales did the great majority of the giving. According to CompuBox statistics, "El Terrible" landed a remarkable 422 total punches, compared to 185 for Ayala.

PHOTOS BY WILL HART/HBO

the kind of kid he is. You hit him and he don't care, he wants to hit you and hit you harder. Whether that means he gets hit again doesn't matter to him."

Morales maintained a frenetic pace almost from start to finish against Ayala, THE RING's junior featherweight champion who was lured to a move to the featherweights by the prospect of his first $1-million payday.

After losing a wide unanimous decision—John Keane and Burt Clements saw it 117-111 for Morales, as did THE RING, while Anek Hongtongkam scored it 116-112 for the Mexican—Ayala was the picture of the battered boxer. He had about six lumps, each the size of a marble, across his forehead, his left eye was swollen completely shut, and his jaw was as big as a melon.

It was the second loss of his career, but only the first in Ayala's mind, since his other defeat, a 1998 technical decision loss to Joichiro Tatsuyoshi in Japan, may have been a case of home-cooking. Ayala, though, didn't feel much like a loser after the bout.

"Hey, I just made a million bucks," he said. "How many other people out there tonight could say that?"

Not many, but then again, not many had to take punishment from the human fighting machine that Morales has become.

After lethargic performances in '01 against Guty Espadas and Chi, Morale been razor sharp the last two times Against Ayala, he showed the whole p age. He had head and upper-body m ment, he picked off punches with gloves, he smartly moved Ayala i direction he wanted, and he cou punched masterfully. Morales whi right after right off Ayala's face thro out the fight. The Texan gamely tri overcome a seven-inch reach disadva by taking the fight inside, but Mor ripped him with uppercuts to discou that tactic.

It was, by any measure, a scintill performance.

"Absolutely stunning how good was," said Hall of Fame trainer Ema Steward, who called the fight for H Pay-Per-View. "He did things I didn't ize he could do. He was magnificent. might not be the right word fo Whatever is better than magnificent, th what Morales was."

The performance, naturally, bro quick talk of matching Barrera Morales for a third time. Morales said was considering moving to junior li weight, though he didn't say it with m conviction. He still hates Barrera passi ately and is bitterly disappointed by outcome of their second fight. Barrera a decision on June 22 to win THE RIN vacant featherweight title, a decision m believed deserved to go to Morales.

After his one-sided win over Tapia weeks before Morales-Ayala, Barr extended an olive branch of sorts to Terrible." He said he would be rooting his one-time arch-enemy and predic Morales to win.

"That is all in the past, and it is time move on," Barrera said after routing Tap "I'm going to be watching the fight like Mexicans and rooting for our Mexic fighter, Erik Morales."

Morales, though, didn't buy it. E before he met Ayala, he was inund with questions about Barrera. He said didn't see Barrera's fight with Tapia said Barrera's apparent gesture of fri ship was hypocritical and phony.

"I wasn't even interested in his fig Morales said. "I didn't see it. I read ab it and heard about it, but I didn't care.

"And I don't care what he says. H saying this now, trying to be polite. H

PHOTO BY GEORGE ARMSTRONG/TOP RANK PROMOTIONS

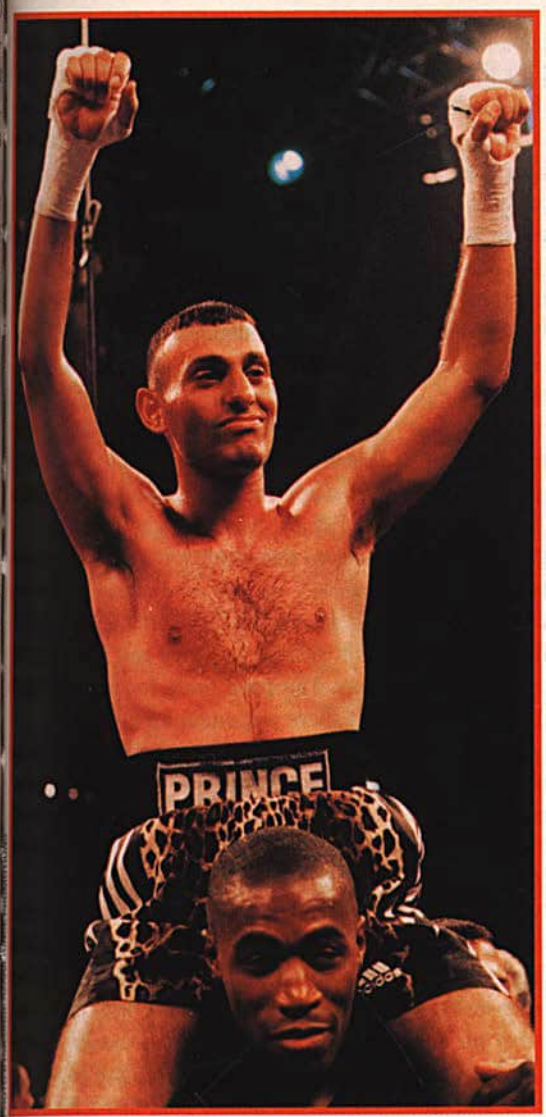
saying the right things in front of the people, but he could care less. If he wants to learn to fight and see what a real fighter is all about, he can watch me."

Morales' promoter, Top Rank's Bob Arum, wasn't quite so harsh because he knows the money a third meeting between the two can generate.

Arum has a close relationship with Barrera promoter John Jackson, who doubles as the assistant head coach of the UNLV football team and whose office is only a two-minute drive from Arum's. That should considerably speed the process of getting the third fight done.

But until he does, Arum isn't sitting idly by. On February 1, he plans to match Marquez and Medina in an intriguing bout. Both have been the forgotten men of the division despite having been among the best in the class for years. Medina's impressive spring performance in losing an outlandish decision to Tapia did little to raise his profile, but beating Marquez might change that. Whether he can beat the younger, harder-hitting Marquez, however, is no sure thing. In fact, Marquez will likely enter the fight as the favorite. Either way, the winner will be well-positioned for a shot at either Barrera or Morales.

And there is no doubt that those two bring the money. That title used to belong to Hamed, but he's been in the ring only once since getting thrashed by Barrera on April 7, 2001, beating little-known Manuel Calvo in shockingly unimpressive fashion.



Prince Naseem Hamed used to be the money man in the featherweight division, but he's virtually disappeared since being whipped by Barrera. The feathers are doing just fine without him, though; Barrera, Morales, and Ayala all earned million-dollar purses for their November fights.

After his dominating win over Ayala, Morales was asked if he would like a shot at Hamed. With a straight face, Morales looked at his questioner and said, "Who?" Then, breaking into a broad grin, Morales added, "Is he still fighting?"

Arum was quick to quell talk of that—he said he tried to make fights with Hamed earlier for both Ayala and Tapia, and wound up banging his head against the wall—but even with Hamed out of the picture, there is a cornucopia of attractive featherweight matches out there.

"Everybody wants to talk to us about Morales, and that's fine, because Marco and Erik have had two great fights, but there are other attractive fights for each guy," Jackson said. "And when you have that, you can take your time and put the right deal together and make sure the timing for the fight is right so that it benefits everybody involved."

Ayala said he's not sure whether he'll continue his

(Continued on page 26)

Featherweights

(Continued from page 25)

dalliance with the featherweight division. There would be interest in a fight with Manny Pacquiao if he stayed at junior featherweight, but that division isn't nearly as rich with big names as the one above it is. Ayala was plenty beaten up by Morales, which seemed to be a signal that he isn't cut out to fight men of that quality at that size. Still, Ayala wasn't about to concede.

"Everybody wanted to mock me and say I was the little guy and that I would get knocked out," Ayala said. "Well, he didn't knock me out, did he? Erik fought a great fight and there is no doubt that he's a terrific fighter, but I think I proved some things to some people, too.

"I could have success here. It just depends on what's best for me. I have to go home and kind of figure out what is the right thing to do. It's hard, now, because this is really my first loss and it's tough to take. It's disappointing, but I have to hand it to Morales."

After 17 years as a pro, Manuel Medina (pictured vs. Tapia) is still a factor in the 126-pound picture. "Mantecas" will meet fellow Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez in a crucial bout in February.

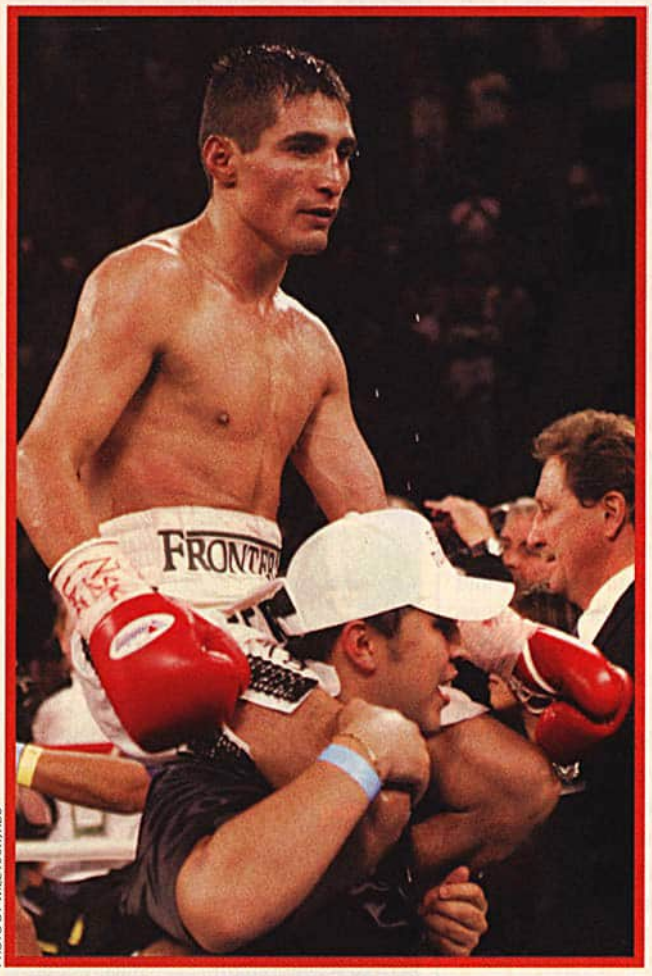


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Morales is paraded around the ring following his destruction of Ayala. El Terrible has talked of a move to junior lightweight, but with so many more appealing opponents at feather, chances are that the 26-year-old will stay put for at least another fight or two.

Morales won so convincingly in large part because he followed the lead of Barrera and improved on his ability to box. Barrera, once an all-offense slugger, went through a metamorphosis over the last couple of years, becoming a boxer against Hamed and retaining that predilection toward defense, jabs, and counters in wins over Morales and Tapia. As for Morales, he always had impressive skills, but his heart often would overrule his mind, and he would wade into brawling situations when it would have been more prudent to stay on the outside and move. Against Ayala, he showed several new dimensions and, for the most part, resisted the urge to slug.

That urge became irresistible in the breathtaking final round, however. Morales showed he can still trade with the best of them, throwing 141 punches in round 12 and landing a CompuBox featherweight record 74 powershots in those three minutes. He had Ayala in serious trouble throughout the final 30 seconds, but referee Kenny Bayless allowed the outgunned Texan to hear the final bell.

"I wanted to finish it and give the people the knockout, but I got hurt," Morales said. When he got quizzical looks after making that statement, Morales held out first his left fist and then his right. "When you hit someone that much, it hurts," he said, grinning.

It was easy to laugh after a Hall of Fame effort against one of the best fighters in the sport. The good thing for boxing fans is that there are undoubtedly more where those came from. Among heavyweights, a performance like that comes along about as often as a solar eclipse. Among the featherweights, it's more like as often as ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*.

"There's not only depth in the division, there is quality depth," Arum said. "It's easy to be a matchmaker if all you're doing is making matches with these guys. You throw any two of about 10 or 12 of them in together and you have an absolute war on you hands. And that's the way it should be."

Kevin Iole covers boxing for the Las Vegas Review-Journal and is a regular contributor to this magazine.

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GATTI HAS HIS DUCKS IN A ROW

New Woman And New Trainer Put The "Art" Back In Arturo

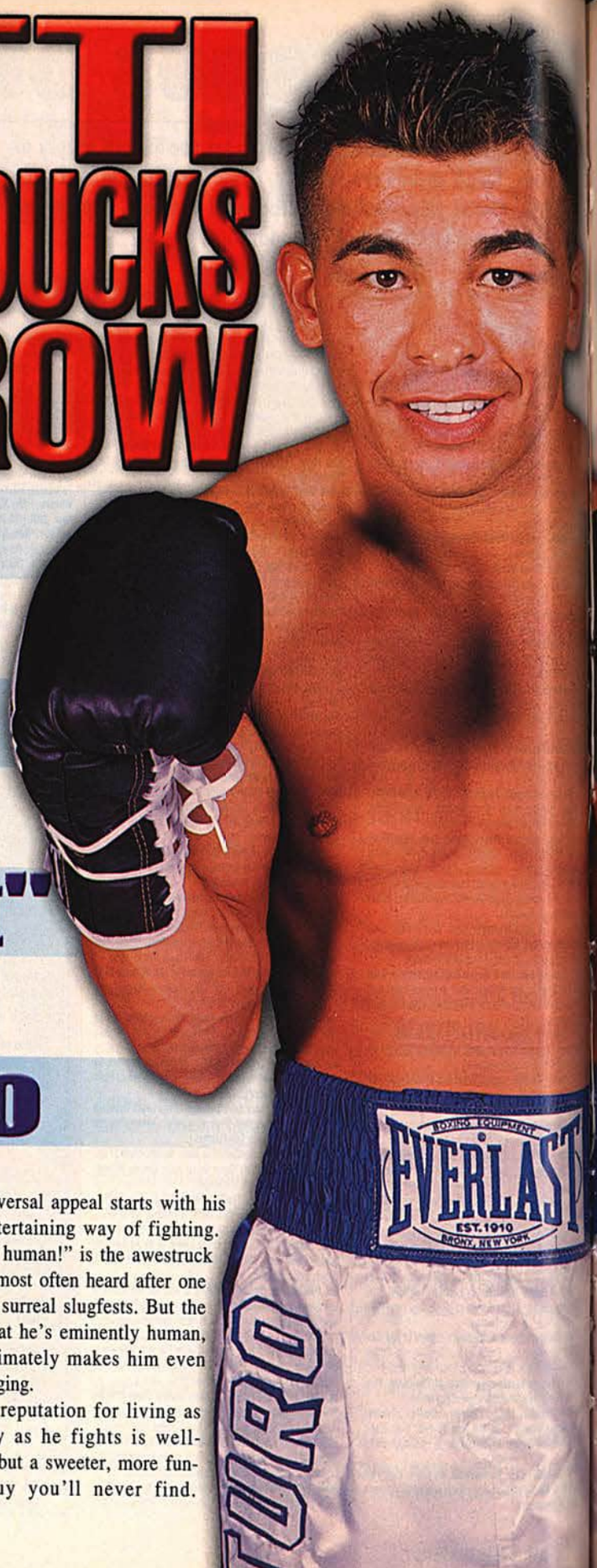

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Feel the "Thunder": Gatti fires a right at Ward during their much-anticipated rematch, which Gatti won via unanimous 10-round decision. It was a punch similar to this that floored Ward in the third round and punctured his eardrum.

By Nigel Collins

The best news in boxing just might be that everybody's favorite fighter has learned how to duck. It was bad news for Micky Ward, of course, but even he's an Arturo Gatti fan.

"There's no one I'd rather lose to," said Ward of the man he'd hugged and kissed at the start of the final round of their November rematch. Gatti has that effect on people, even the people he beats up.

His universal appeal starts with his wildly entertaining way of fighting. "He's not human!" is the awestruck comment most often heard after one of Gatti's surreal slugfests. But the truth is that he's eminently human, which ultimately makes him even more engaging.

Gatti's reputation for living as recklessly as he fights is well-deserved, but a sweeter, more fun-loving guy you'll never find.

Although he's 30 now and has had 41 pro bouts, Gatti retains a large degree of boyish charm. At the postfight press conference, with a black wool cap pulled down over his forehead, he looked like a kid who'd just come indoors after a snowball fight.

But it wasn't snowballs Gatti and Ward were throwing at each other inside Atlantic City's packed Boardwalk Hall. Although not as scintillating as their apocalyptic first encounter, it was still a riveting, hard-hitting contest. The atmosphere crackled with excitement and the capacity crowd was in a

PHOTO BY AL BELLO/GETTY IMAGES

Ward sags along the ropes as Gatti tags him with a left hook. Despite suffering a knockdown and a busted eardrum seconds earlier, the super tough Ward survived Gatti's follow-up barrage and lasted the entire 10 rounds with his equilibrium scrambled.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

A happy Gatti celebrates his biggest win in years as the capacity crowd at Atlantic City's Boardwalk Hall salutes boxing's ultimate warrior.

continual uproar from the moment the blue-collar gladiators entered the arena until the unanimous decision in Gatti's favor was announced.

The emphatic victory in such a high-profile fight boosted Gatti to a new level of stardom at a time when another loss could easily have sent his career into freefall. Moreover, the manner in which Gatti won was filled with promise. Thanks to his rediscovered boxing skills, it looks like he could be exhilarating audiences for far longer than anyone could have possibly imagined at the start of the year, when the memory of his uncompromising 2001 loss to Oscar De La Hoya was still fresh.

Now, following his best performance in years, Gatti is talking title again, and a fight with world junior welterweight champion Kostya Tszyu doesn't sound anywhere near as preposterous as it did prior to Gatti-Ward II.

"Arturo can win a championship at 140 pounds, if he sticks to the game," said Kery Davis, senior vice president of HBO Sports.

But a shot at Tszyu is just one of the numerous opportunities that have opened up to Gatti in the wake of the Ward victory. There was also talk of a bout against WBA lightweight titleholder Leonard Dorin in Montreal, the Canadian city where Gatti was born and where the Romanian is currently based. A rubber match with Ward is always a possibility.

Regardless of whom Gatti fights next, he'll be on the shelf for at least four months, rehabbing from surgery to his right hand, which was broken in two places in the Ward rematch. But when he does fight again, he'll carry into battle the knowledge that it was his revived boxing skills, not his customary Kamikaze attack, that allowed him to win the rematch by such a wide margin and escape relatively unscathed. Seeing Gatti use lateral movement, duck low under Ward's murderous left hook, and even clinch strategically from time to time was something of an epiphany.

We always knew Gatti could box; his near-flawless demonstration of the Sweet Science in his second fight with Tracy Patterson proved it. But that was back in 1997. Not long after that Gatti fell in love with his "Most Exciting Fighter In The World" reputation, and began to count on his courage and incredible recuperative powers to salvage victory. This, coupled with his habit of blowing up in weight between fights, to say nothing of his toxicity levels, extracted a terrible price on his body.

All things considered, it's a miracle Gatti fared as well as he did. His promoter, Kathy Duva, joked after the second Ward match that this was Gatti's first postfight press conference in years. Win or lose, he was usually too busy getting sewn back together at the local hospital to talk with the media. In fact, watching Gatti fight had become an excruciating ordeal for those closest to him.

"I was slowly slipping into my chair to cover my face [during the first Ward fight]," Gatti's manager, Pat Lynch, told *USA Today*.

Much of the credit for Gatti's late-career turnaround goes to trainer Buddy McGirt. But before McGirt was able to work his magic, somebody else was largely responsible for putting Gatti in the frame of mind where he'd be responsive to McGirt's counsel. That person is Vivian Penha, Arturo's fiancée.

"I knew who Arturo was before I met him," Penha told THE RING a few days after Gatti-Ward II. "I always liked boxing, but usually only watched the big heavyweight fights. Then a friend took me to Atlantic City to see Arturo's fights with Angel Manfredy and Ivan Robinson. Unfortunately, he lost those two fights back to back, and I thought, *Oh my God, how can they let this guy fight like that?* But he was remarkable to watch and stood out in my mind."

Not long afterward, Penha went out to eat with some friends, and Gatti just happened to be at the same North Jersey restaurant. This time, Cupid was in his corner.

"I was so excited he was there," recalled Penha, "and without all the blood on his face, he was good looking, too. I intro-

GATTI USES THE BUDDY SYSTEM TO WARD OFF MICKY

Many will say that the pivotal moment of the Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward rematch came in the third round, when Gatti rocketed a right hand into Ward's left ear that sent him stumbling face first into the turnbuckle pad and then to his knees. But a more significant moment took place at the 1:33 mark of the previous round. That was when Gatti ducked down so low, Ward was unable to land his signature left hook to the body. It was a move that trainer Buddy McGirt had instilled in Gatti during endless hours in the gym, and it took away Ward's greatest weapon.

Everybody knew that Gatti could both dish it out and take it. But could he dish it out, and *not* take quite so much in return? That was the key question, and when Gatti unveiled his deep-dip move in the second round, coupled with the sprightly lateral movement he began to employ in the first, you began to sense it was possible.

Not that the right hand that floored Ward didn't play a key role in Gatti's victory. It was huge. The punch that caromed off "Irish Micky's" shoulder and smashed into his ear busted his eardrum and scrambled his equilibrium. But you know how tough Ward is; he not only beat referee Earl Morton's count, he survived Gatti's thunderous follow-up assault and was punching back at the bell.

Ward, 142, had a fairly decent comeback in the fourth, but after that the bout settled into a pattern. Gatti used his legs to keep the action at a comfortable distance, and then he'd dart in close, unleash a quick cluster of punches, and quickly move out of range. Usually he was gone before Ward could retaliate, but not always; Micky's left hand was always a factor. Gatti also countered Ward's offensive rushes effectively, often with well-placed rights to the body. In this respect, he beat Ward at his own game.

Ducking low (above) and boxing behind the jab on the outside (below) were keys to Gatti's emphatic victory

PHOTOS BY TOM CASINO

As the rounds flew by at a rapid, tension-packed pace, McGirt kept reminding Gatti to "stay low," and he did just that, fighting his most disciplined fight in years. Still, it was never easy, Ward kept rumbling forward, landing enough punches to keep his supporters' hopes alive and stop Gatti from getting too brash.

Gatti, 142, landed a number of additional rights as the fight progressed, including a couple of teeth-rattling uppercuts. He also made good use of his left hook, but never came close to dropping Ward again. Ward had his best round in the ninth, clubbing Gatti with several jolting rights, but Gatti was back in charge in the 10th, punctuating the fight with a clean left-right at the bell.

As was the case after their first fight, both combatants were effusive in their praise of one another at the postfight press conference. We expected nothing less from such honorable men.

The unanimous decision in Gatti's favor was a no-brainer: Judges George Hill and Luis Rivera both scored it 98-91, while Joseph Pasquale had it even wider at 98-90. CompuBox's punchstats were just as one-sided, with Gatti landing 276 shots, compared to 180 for Ward.

The capacity crowd of 12,238 generated a live gate of approximately $1.6-million.

Gatti, 35-6 (28), made approximately $1.2-million, while Ward, 38-12 (27), took home around $1.5-million. Both earned every penny.

Promoters: Main Events, Bally's Atlantic City, DiBella Entertainment

Television: HBO

(11-23-02)

—NC

WARD: "I WANT TO GO OUT WITH ALL MY MARBLES"

Even before Gatti evened their series at 1-1, Micky Ward had said he was only going to have three more fights tops, including the rematch. Ward, who's been involved in almost as many wars as Gatti, is understandably concerned about the long-range consequences of the pounding his body has absorbed in almost 17 years of trading punches for a living.

"I want to go out with all my marbles," said Ward in an interview published in *KO*, THE RING's sister publication, prior to the rematch. "It can only take one punch to turn everything around, and I don't want that. I have my whole life ahead of me ... I want to grow old with my wife-to-be and my daughter, and I want to be normal."

Ward's perforated eardrum should heal with rest, and he's been otherwise cleared medically to fight again. But the punishing nature of the Gatti rematch has knocked a fight off of Ward's career plan, and he now intends to push for a rubber match with Gatti and retire immediately afterward, win or lose.

The tough part for the 37-year-old from Lowell, Massachusetts, is that it has only been during the last year or so that he's transcended regional favorite status and become a national phenomenon. Thankfully, Ward is an unusually well-grounded individual. When the time comes to step out of the spotlight, it won't emotionally traumatize him. And he's always been careful with money, working as a road paver between bouts.

Like Gatti, Ward is an immensely likeable man, and when he retires, the game will lose a rare commodity. With all due respect to HBO, fighters like Gatti and Ward are the real "Heart & Soul" of boxing.

—NC

How much more of this can Ward take?

duced myself and we talked. He was impressed that I knew so much about his career. It turned out to be one of my greatest nights, and since then we've been inseparable."

By the time Arturo and Vivian got together, Gatti's reputation as a party animal was legendary. And it wasn't just the drinking and hanging out at strip clubs. There were a couple of alcohol-fueled incidents involving the police, and he still has a knife scar on his back, a souvenir of a street fight over a woman.

Although Gatti's lifestyle was counterproductive to his boxing career, the extracurricular activities enhanced his appeal. Fans have always loved fighters who could party as hard as they could fight, and even insiders who knew he was hurting himself, people who cared about him, couldn't help being captivated by Gatti's wild and crazy persona.

"I'll never forget the time he came to a postfight party wearing sunglasses," said Ward's adviser Lou DiBella, who fell in love with Gatti when he was an executive with HBO. "I saw something running down his face from under his shades. At first I thought he was crying, but then I realized it was blood. He didn't want to go get stitched up; he wanted to party."

Meeting Penha didn't instantly transform Gatti into a saint.

"It was hard at first," said Penha. "There were lots of issues, a lot of pain and hurt. Arturo is a very extreme guy. He's either really good or really bad. The reason I kept coming back was that when he's good, he's the greatest person in the world.

"Arturo was struggling. There were a lot of factors involved. He had fame and fortune at an early age, and he was out there on the loose with money in his pocket and no guidance, as his family was in Canada. I thought that maybe he was lonely. But I knew that if I could have enough influence on him, he could change. I told him many times that he needed to open his eyes and get himself together."

Slowly, thanks in large part to Penha's gentle yet persistent persuasion, Gatti began to regain control of both his career and personal life.

"I got back down to earth when I met Vivian," is the way Gatti puts it.

McGirt, currently boxing's hottest trainer and the latest in a lengthy line of men who have tried to harness Gatti's free spirit, came aboard three fights ago. First, he helped Gatti shock the boxing community with an easy fourth-round knockout of Terronn Millett in January '02. That Gatti beat the faded but still dangerous Millett wasn't all that surprising, but the fact that he boxed intelligently, picked his spots, and stopped Millett without absorbing undue punishment or bleeding all over the place was a revelation.

Gatti poses with fiancée Vivian Penha, the woman who helped him turn his life around and extend his career. Gatti's increased discipline outside the ring has led to improved discipline inside as well.

Next came the first fight with Ward, a breathtaking struggle that left everyone grasping for superlatives. The fight was as close as it was majestic, and the rematch created so much interest that the venue sold out more than a week prior to the fight. Furthermore, HBO's ratings increased from 7.3 for the first fight to 8.6 for the second, a boost of approximately 18 percent.

Unlike most fighters, Gatti's popularity never diminished when he lost. His willingness to sacrifice himself for our pleasure made him the antithesis of Roy Jones—the anti-Jones, if you will—and we adored him for it. And if Gatti sacrifices himself a little less in the future, that's okay. His place among the game's greatest action fighters is secure, and nothing is ever going to change that. So keep ducking, Arturo. We won't love you any less, just a lot longer. ■

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SPINKS ... FOSTER ... MUSTAFA ... TORRES ... CZYZ

WHAT ROY CAN LEARN FROM THE VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

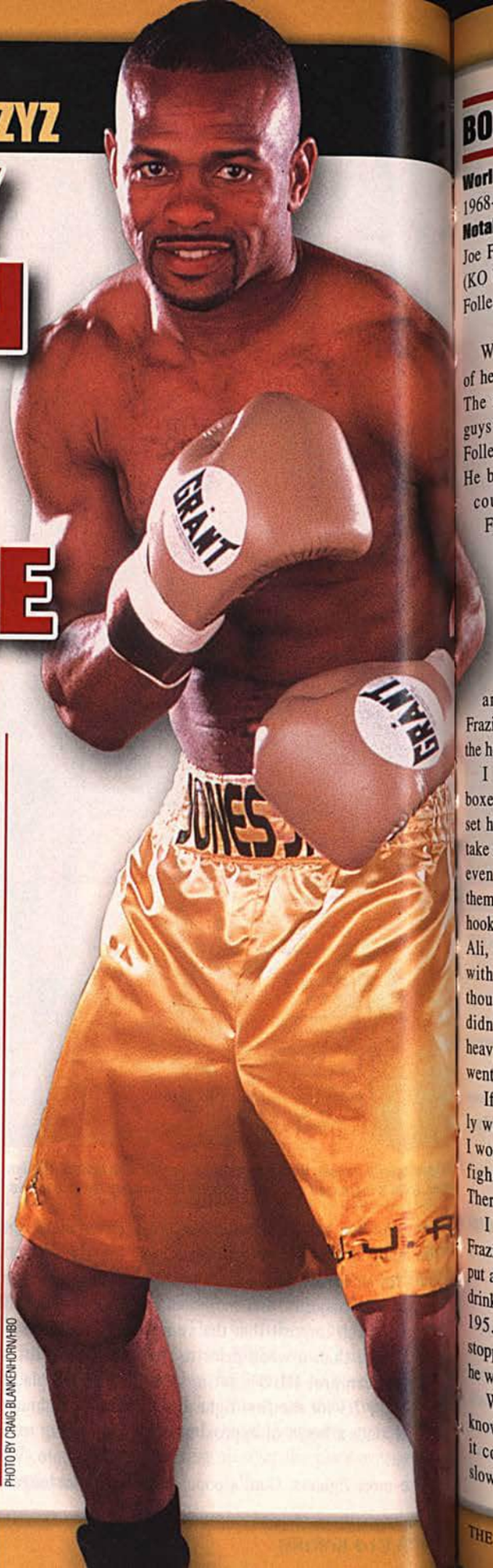


PHOTO BY CRAIG BLANKENHORN/HBO

By William Dettloff

You're not alone if you think the proposed bout between light heavyweight champion Roy Jones and heavyweight beltholder John Ruiz is intriguing on a number of levels. To wit: Can the smaller Jones find a way to deal with Ruiz' size advantage? Will his edge in talent and speed be enough to offset Ruiz' greater strength? What happens when Ruiz catches Jones with a couple of clean shots? And does Jones hit hard enough to keep Ruiz off of him, never mind stop him? Can Jones, a small, magnificently talented boxer, topple Ruiz, a big, rugged, modestly talented mauler?

All the unknowns about this match, and there are many, essentially can be reduced to one primary and familiar question: Can a light heavyweight champion beat a tough, top-10 heavyweight (which is what Ruiz is, regardless of what the WBA will tell you)?

The light heavyweight vs. heavyweight discussion has been around forever. Light heavyweights have always gone after heavyweights. They'll probably continue to, even as heavyweights get larger. They have to. Not only because the money is bigger there, but because everything is: the glory, the fame, everything they started fighting for in the first place.

So of course they have to stretch themselves and see if they can get in on it all. It doesn't matter how superior they are at 175. Even the great Archie Moore couldn't satisfy himself with being the emperor of all light heavyweights. His was a heavyweight appetite.

In this feature, five former light heavyweight titleholders who couldn't resist going after the big boys tell you what they found when they got there and what it was like being in the ring with them. They share their strategies, their recollections, their regrets, and what they think of Jones' challenge of Ruiz. They all offer suggestions to their compatriot. You get the sense they're rooting for him. You can't blame them for that.

BOB FOSTER

World Light Heavyweight Champion: 1968-'74
Notable Heavyweight Opponents: Joe Frazier (KO by 2), Muhammad Ali (KO by 8), Doug Jones (KO by 8), Zora Folley (L 10), Ernie Terrell (KO by 7)

When I was coming up, I fought a lot of heavyweights. Not top-10-type guys. The fighters I didn't beat were rated guys: Doug Jones, Ernie Terrell, Zora Folley. Folley taught me how to fight. He boxed the hell out of me. But he couldn't hit, thankfully. Ali and Frazier, well, they brought hell to you. Fighting Joe was like fighting a big grizzly bear.

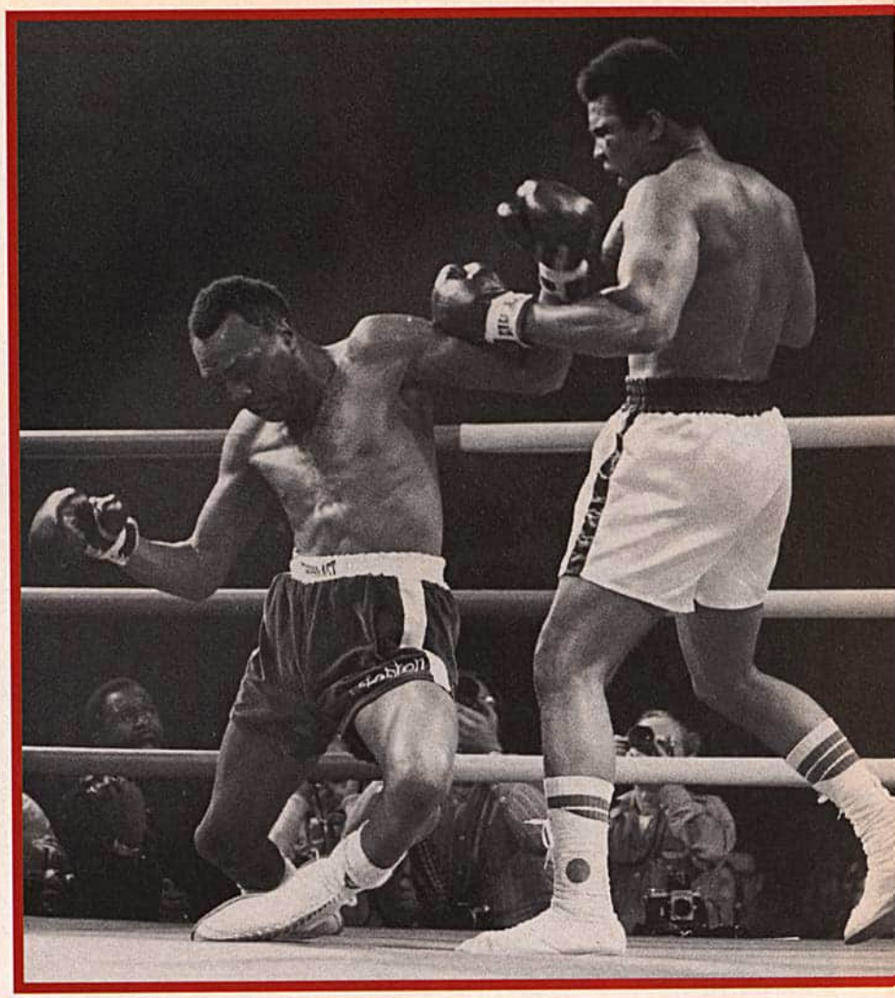
At light heavyweight, I walked all over those guys. I was too big and strong for those guys. I'd hit them clean once or twice, and that was it. But guys like Frazier—he was built like a tank. A lot of the heavyweights were just too strong.

I wasn't a slugger. I was a stand-up boxer-puncher. I'd jab a guy, jab him, set him up, step over, jab him, and then take a shot. If I got him right, he'd go. I even hurt the heavyweights when I hit them right. When I hit Frazier with a left hook in the first round, I hurt him. I hurt Ali, too, in the sixth or seventh round with back-to-back right hands. But I thought he was clowning around, and didn't go after him. When I hit light heavyweights on the chin like that, they went. Not the heavyweights, though.

If I had it to do over again, I definitely would fight heavyweights again. And I wouldn't do anything different. I'd just fight 'em. I wish I could do it now. There's nothing out there now.

I never could bulk up. Before the Frazier fight, a guy I knew said he could put a lot of weight on me, and he had me drinking this stuff, and I got up to about 195. But the stuff made me so sick I stopped taking it. I was 179 for Frazier; he was 209.

Would I tell Jones to bulk up? I don't know. If he could gain 10 or 15 pounds, it could help him as long as it didn't slow him down too much. Roy Jones is a good puncher. He can't punch quite like I did, but he bangs pretty good. He's slick and clever. I don't know if he could punch hard enough to knock out Ruiz. I would just tell him to fight his fight. I know Roy is fast. I'd like to see him take Ruiz out.



Bob Foster crumbles under the attack of Muhammad Ali in his 1972 fight with "The Greatest." The light heavyweight champion was dynamite against fellow 175-pounders, but simply wasn't strong enough to rumble with the best of the big boys.

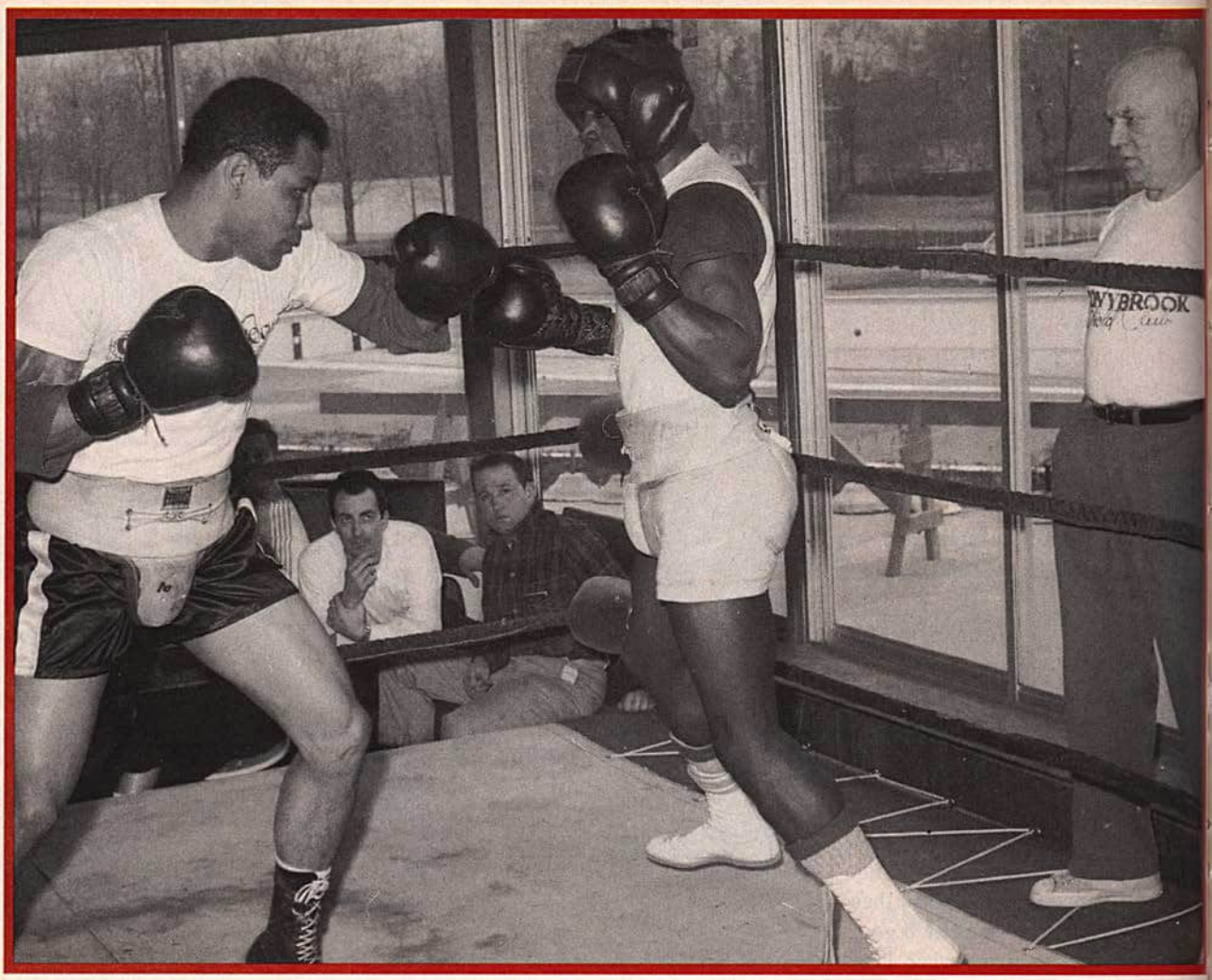
JOSE TORRES

World Light Heavyweight Champion: 1965-'67
Notable Heavyweight Opponent: Tom McNeeley (W 10)

I knew what Cus D'Amato was looking for in that fight with Tom McNeeley: He wanted me to fight Muhammad Ali, and this was the first step. A few days before the fight, I felt a sharp pain in my stomach, but I didn't say anything. It was too close to the fight, and I didn't want to cancel it.

I knocked McNeeley down in the second round. I thought that was too soon to knock him out, so I just boxed him for a few rounds and won every round, but my stomach hurt the whole time. I came out in the fifth to knock him out, but I couldn't do it. It was a very tough fight, even though I won every round. It was tough in the sense that I was hitting him and hitting him, but I couldn't take him out.

After the fight, I went to the hospital, and they told me I had an inflammation of the pancreas. I was in the hospital for 26 days. I came out and was okay, but Cus would never allow me to fight another heavyweight. He didn't know that I went into the fight with pain.



Light heavyweight champ Jose Torres (left) boxed plenty of heavyweights in the gym, but his lone heavyweight bout was a painful 10-round decisio over Tom McNeeley in 1965. After that, Torres' manager, Cus D'Amato (far right), wouldn't allow him to fight any more heavyweights.

My philosophy on boxing is it's not the taller guy who wins or the bigger guy or the heavier guy or the guy who hits harder or who is faster. I believe if you are smart and have character and the will to win, you have a chance to win no matter what. It's what you have in your head that counts the most.

I was Floyd Patterson's main sparring partner when he was heavyweight champion of the world, and one time I knocked him down when we were sparring. I also sparred every day with Hurricane Jackson, and I boxed Oscar Bonavena every day for weeks.

I loved boxing heavyweights because I was faster than them and had fun. The height and weight they had on me did not make any difference. It's how good you are that counts.

I was as good or better than them. They didn't hit harder than light heavyweights. If a light heavyweight punches right he could always beat a heavyweight. It's all character and intelligence. The fans believe that if you are a stronger fighter or a faster fighter or have more power, that's what makes you win. That's not it. It's when you punch that counts, and where, and accuracy—not how hard or fast.

Ruiz has a chance against Jones because he is a good fighter. He's not as exciting as Jones is, but he is a good fighter. Anyone who gives Evander Holyfield three tough fights is a good fighter. If I were Roy Jones' manager, I would not make that match. Ruiz doesn't have a reputation as a good fighter, so if Jones loses, everyone will say he was beaten by a bad fighter.

Ruiz doesn't have the right style to impress fans, but he has character and is smart. I would not tell Jones to put on weight. He has to be good—not heavier.

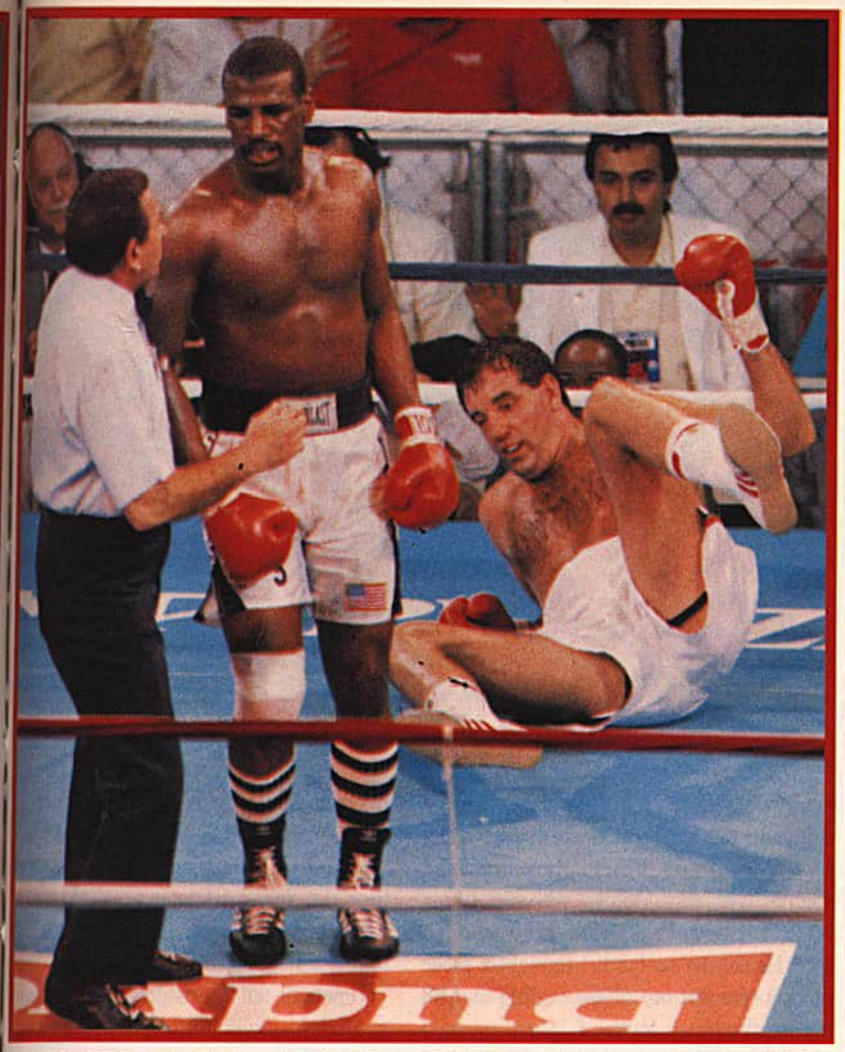
MICHAEL SPINKS

WBA Light Heavyweight Titleholder: 1981-'83

World Light Heavyweight Champion: 1983-'85

Notable Heavyweight Opponents: Larry Holmes (W 15, W 15), Gerry Cooney (KO 5), Mike Tyson (KO by 1)

I sparred with a lot of heavyweights when I was a light heavyweight. There was a period from December of 1978 to October '79 when I was inactive from a knee injury, so when I came back, I went down to Joe Frazier's gym in Philadelphia and sparred with a lot of



The bigger they are, the harder they fall: Former light heavyweight champion Michael Spinks floors 238-pound Gerry Cooney en route to a fifth-round knockout victory. Spinks won four of his five heavyweight bouts, losing only to a prime Mike Tyson.

heavyweights: Tex Cobb, Mike Kornicki, Marvin Stinson.

Those guys hit hard. We had the bigger gloves on and the headgear and they were told not to hit me too hard because I was a light heavyweight. But, man, they hit hard. I didn't think that I'd be able to take a punch from a big heavyweight because I have a skinny neck. Plus, as a light heavyweight I was used to fighting guys about the same size. But I found out I could take it from those guys.

As a heavyweight, I was still a puncher. If I nailed anyone clean, they went. When I went up in weight, I would hit Tex Cobb, who was a kickboxer, so hard in the gym that he would jump and do a 360-degree turn and make like he was going to kick me. That's when I knew I hurt him. My punches kicked. I could hurt heavyweights in the gym. Anyone I hit good—light heavyweight or heavyweight—they responded.

Larry Holmes was very difficult to hit. I knew I had to fight him like a bat out of hell. He was a boxer—he didn't make a lot of contact, like clinching, and leaning. I don't know how I would have fared against a guy like Lennox Lewis who is big and uses his body on you. Billy Conn did so well against Joe Louis because he could box, and Louis wasn't the kind of guy to lie on you.

I didn't put on that much weight when I moved up. My street weight was about 200 pounds. I wanted armor and muscle as a heavyweight, so when I got hit it wouldn't hurt as bad. It worked to

(Continued on page 38)

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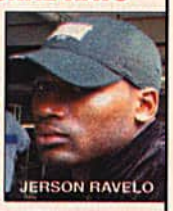

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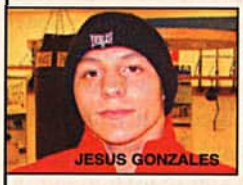

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Roy Jones

(Continued from page 37)

my advantage. The bulk as far as muscles made me feel comfortable.

Against Holmes, I was fighting like a light heavyweight even though I was a 200-pound heavyweight. I was so ready. I knew I picked up a little power and a little more kick in my punches. In training camp, my sparring partners wouldn't let me hit them because I was hitting so hard. They kept tying me up. I wasn't even a natural heavyweight. But I could kick pretty hard and I was accurate.

I would tell Jones to use his speed. Have him dart in and get out, the way I did when I fought Larry. After you piss him off, you get on your bicycle. You piss him off, and then don't let him get off by moving away. I'd tell him to take advantage of his speed. And it's very important that he gets in great shape so he can fight all night long. Roy has those fast hands, and you can't lose with fast hands. He can catch Ruiz and get out of the way if he's punching right. Roy can get him to cover up while he's punching and just keep him busy with flush punches.

BOBBY CZYZ

IBF Light Heavyweight Titleholder: 1986-'87

Notable Heavyweight Opponents: Evander Holyfield (KO by 5), Corrie Sanders (KO by 2)

If you take a Volkswagen and point it east going 60 mph, and take a pick-up truck and point it west going the same speed, something is going to get damaged, and it's not the pick-up. Speed plus mass equals destructive power.

Taking punches from a heavyweight when you're not used to it is hard. The body can only absorb so much. Not only that, the punches you're used to hurting guys with just don't have the same effect. Even if you're a good puncher at light heavyweight, it's not the same against a big heavyweight.

Bobby Czyz samples a punch from Evander Holyfield during their 1996 bout. Czyz, who was stopped in the fifth round, thinks Ruiz' size will enable him to wear down Jones and stop him.

What surprised me about fighting heavyweights? Well, I expected it to be different, but until you do it there's really no way to know how different it is. I sparred with Ray Mercer, who hits like a mule. I was about 195 and he was about 230. He hit me so hard, I thought a piece of concrete fell out of the ceiling and hit me on the head. It was frightening how painful it was. For a couple of seconds, I literally couldn't see him, and he was standing right in front of me! That's how much it hurt.

Another time I sparred this guy who was about 6'7" and 277 pounds. I was about 220. He wasn't as good a boxer as I was, but he was so big it was difficult even trying to fend him off. That's another thing: You expend an awful lot of energy just trying to hold a bigger guy off you, energy you normally would spend trying to hurt the guy. Also, you have to adjust to when you hit the big guys with your Sunday punch and it doesn't do anything to them. But then they hit you on the arm, and it moves you back two feet.

Corrie Sanders wasn't a big puncher, but he's a big guy, and when you get out there with those small gloves against a big guy like that it's hard. He hit me so many times and so hard, I took a knee just to clear my head.

Jones should put on weight only if it's functionally efficient weight; that is, if he can retain his speed and increase his power with the weight, then it would be good to have that extra mass. If you lose the speed, then it's weight gained just for the sake of gaining weight, and that's not going to help.

I would tell Jones don't try and prove you can play with the big boys at their own game. Fight smart. It's a different game at heavyweight. Roy is probably going to be a lot quicker than Ruiz, but he won't have the longer reach and he won't have better power. He's going to have to try to adjust to not being the stronger guy.

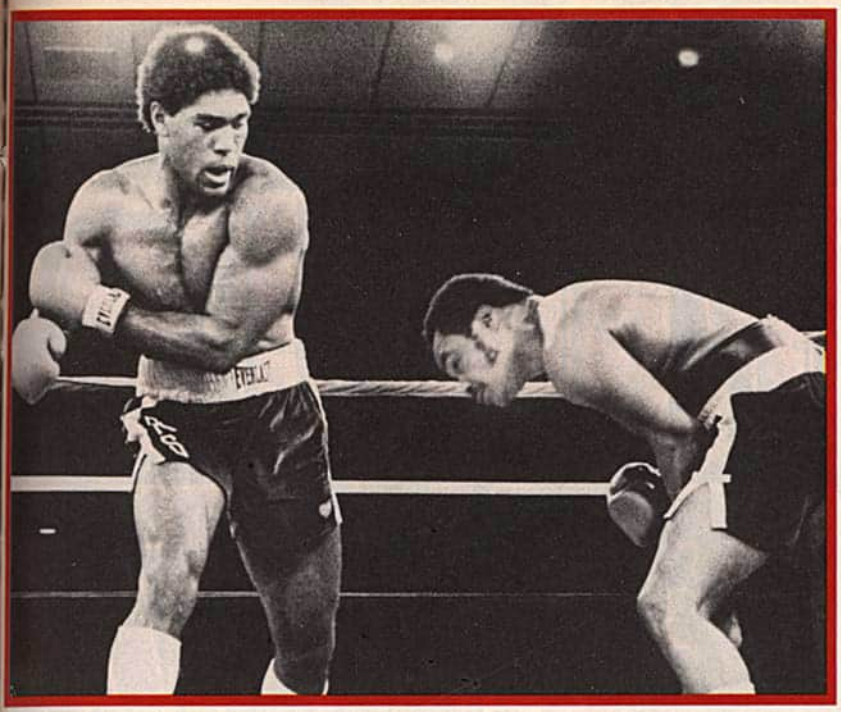
I have to think at some point Ruiz is going to wear Roy down with his size, and Roy is going to get knocked out.

EDDIE MUSTAFA MUHAMMAD

WBA Light Heavyweight Titleholder: 1980-'81

Notable Heavyweight Opponents: Renaldo Snipes (L 10)

I boxed a lot of heavyweights in the gym when I was a light heavyweight, and I liked it. Basically, my hands were faster than theirs. I boxed Tony Tubbs, Tim Witherspoon, Ali, all champions or



In the only heavyweight bout of his career, WBA 175-pound titleholder Eddie Mustafa Muhammad ducks low to avoid a left hook from Renaldo Snipes. Muhammad, who lost a 10-round decision to Snipes in 1981, thinks Jones can use speed and smarts to beat Ruiz.

champions-to-be when I boxed them. I always held my own.

You use the speed first and then you turn on the power against those big guys. You don't take a punch flush or go punch-for-punch with those big guys. You try to take as little of the punch as you can by rolling with it. You can't take too much from a heavyweight. You can't try to block it all and take it on the arms either. But you can use reflexes and speed to offset those big guys.

Number one, I would tell Jones not to come in too heavy. He should be boxing and sticking and moving around, not standing still. So he wouldn't need all that weight. He'd have to maintain that speed even though he's fighting a heavyweight. Roy is a very unorthodox fighter. He does a lot of things wrong, and they work out right for him. That would be very good in this situation with Ruiz.

I don't think Roy hits that hard, but I think he can use his speed and pinpoint punching accuracy to get Ruiz' attention, enough to make him say, "I don't want to get hit with that again." He will get Ruiz' attention. But he'll have to do a lot of moving. He'll have to depend on his legs to get him out of trouble. That's the way Snipes fought me. He boxed. He fought like he was the light heavyweight and I was the heavyweight. That's because he knew I could punch.

You've got to know how to fight these big guys. A lot of the time light heavyweights come in too heavy. If they come in heavy they think, *I'm a heavyweight now*. No way. No way. They've got to come in around their walking-around weight.

I was at my best at middleweight and light heavy. But if you're a light heavyweight, there comes a point when you want to test the big guys. I knew I could hang with them because I was a big light heavyweight who could punch.

I took out a lot of guys with one shot. I could hit. Light heavyweights always hit harder than heavyweights. Light heavyweights' punches were sharper punches and were faster. Heavyweights threw more thudding punches. The guy who hit me the hardest was a light heavyweight—Matthew Saad Muhammad. Man, he could punch.

If Roy fights a smart fight, he could win. He's got to fight a conservative fight, box, move, and feint Ruiz out of position. It's not about power in this fight. Jones has to use his brains and boxing skill. He has to use his expertise. ■

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Out Of Africa

PHILLIP NDOU & SILENCE MABUZA

Unknown ... But Not For Long

By Nigel Collins

Phillip Ndou and Silence Mabuza materialize out of the Manhattan drizzle one November afternoon, two slender young men wrapped in sweats and tracksuits. They'd come from halfway around the world, the choice fruit of a far-away crop, eager to please and confident of their ability to do so.

The photo shoot that brought them to a New York photographer's studio was a pleasant interlude before getting down to more demanding tasks. And it didn't take long to realize that although they are countrymen and share a common dream, in many ways Ndou and Mabuza couldn't be less alike.

Ndou is a charismatic sapling of a man with a sunbeam smile and a killer rep, a guy who's created a buzz among hardcore fans in this country without ever having appeared on American TV. He's a teeny bit shy at first, but it doesn't take long for the butterfly to emerge from its cocoon.

Comrade-in-arms Mabuza is reserved and almost as quiet as his first name. There's a business-like air about him, and if not exactly Ndou's straight man, surely a counterbalance. Where Ndou is playful, Mabuza is mostly serious—though he did show his lighthearted side with an exaggerated muscleman pose and brief giggle near the end of the photo session.

Later, at the gym, it's easy to see how their body language and fighting styles mirror their personalities. Ndou is fluid, almost loosey-goosey, Mabuza compact and precise. Together, they represent what one Johannesburg newspaper called the "current crown jewels of South African boxing."

Ndou, 25, and Mabuza, 26, are both stars in their native land, but gladly relinquished their normal status to come to America to fight off-TV on the Sharmba Mitchell-Vince Phillips undercard. Being famous in South Africa can take a boxer only so far, and Ndou, Mabuza, and their manager-trainer Nick Durandt see the big picture—not to mention the big money that awaits if they can duplicate the success they've had at home in the United States.

Mabuza and Ndou are following a well-worn path first blazed by Senegal's Battling Siki, who barnstormed the United States in the 1920s. Since then, numerous African fighters have journeyed to these shores in order to further their careers. Nigeria's Dick Tiger and Ghana's Azumah Nelson were clearly the most successful and both became favorites with American fans. Tiger is already enshrined in the International Boxing Hall of Fame, and Nelson is a shoo-in as a first-ballot inductee as soon as he's eligible.

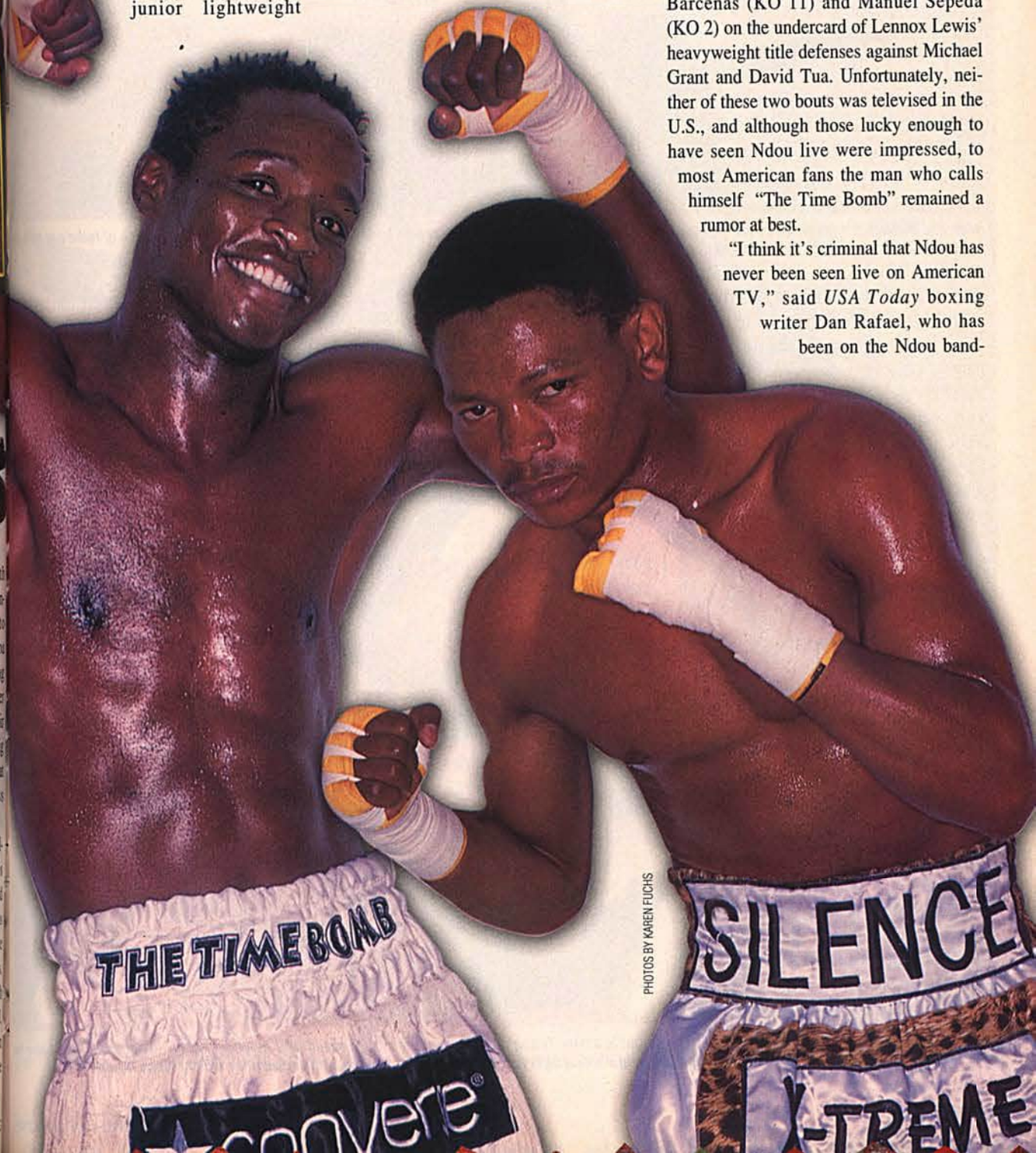
Although many among the South African contingent have also done well over the years, none has approached the legendary status of Tiger and Nelson. Gerrie Coetzee held the WBA heavyweight belt briefly, but the best South African fighters have always been from the lighter weight classes. Brian Mitchell had a long run as a junior lightweight titlist, but only fought two of his 49 pro bouts in the U.S. Sugarboy Malinga and Dingaan Thobela were gifted but wildly inconsistent. Vuyani Bungu, Welcome Ncita, Phillip Holiday, Lehlo Ledwaba, and Mbulelo Botile all held alphabet titles and fought here from time to time, but only Bungu held on to his belt for very long.

Now come junior lightweight Ndou and bantamweight Mabuza, the latest South Africans to cross the Atlantic Ocean with gym bags slung over their shoulders and visions of glory swimming in their heads. Their faith in the American Dream is as strong as it is simplistic.

"The United States is the land of opportunity," said Mabuza. "I'm coming from Africa to make my mark. People will see me fight and want more."

It's a straightforward enough proposition, but not as easy to put into motion as it might seem. The Oklahoma City bout was Mabuza's first in the United States, but Ndou had fought here twice before, scoring eye-catching wins over Edgar Barcenas (KO 11) and Manuel Sepeda (KO 2) on the undercard of Lennox Lewis' heavyweight title defenses against Michael Grant and David Tua. Unfortunately, neither of these two bouts was televised in the U.S., and although those lucky enough to have seen Ndou live were impressed, to most American fans the man who calls himself "The Time Bomb" remained a rumor at best.

"I think it's criminal that Ndou has never been seen live on American TV," said *USA Today* boxing writer Dan Rafael, who has been on the Ndou band-

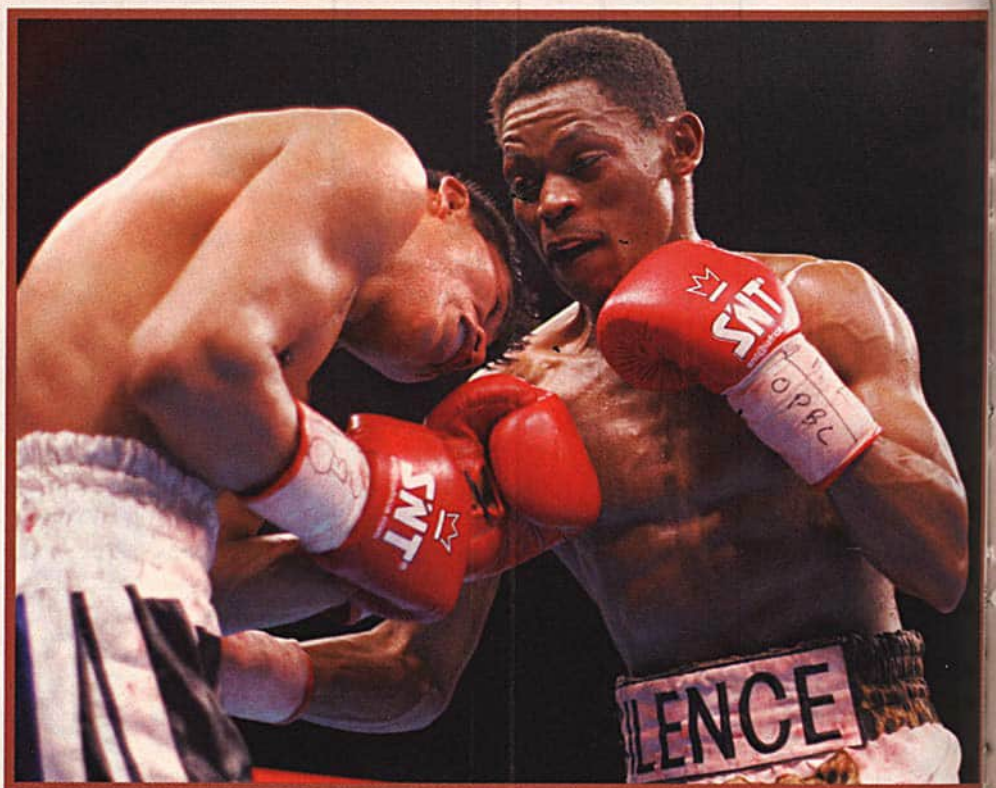


Ndou and Mabuza are following in the footsteps of many other South African fighters who have come to the United States in search of fame and fortune, including, from left to right: Vuyani Bungu, Welcome Ncita, and Mbulelo Botile.

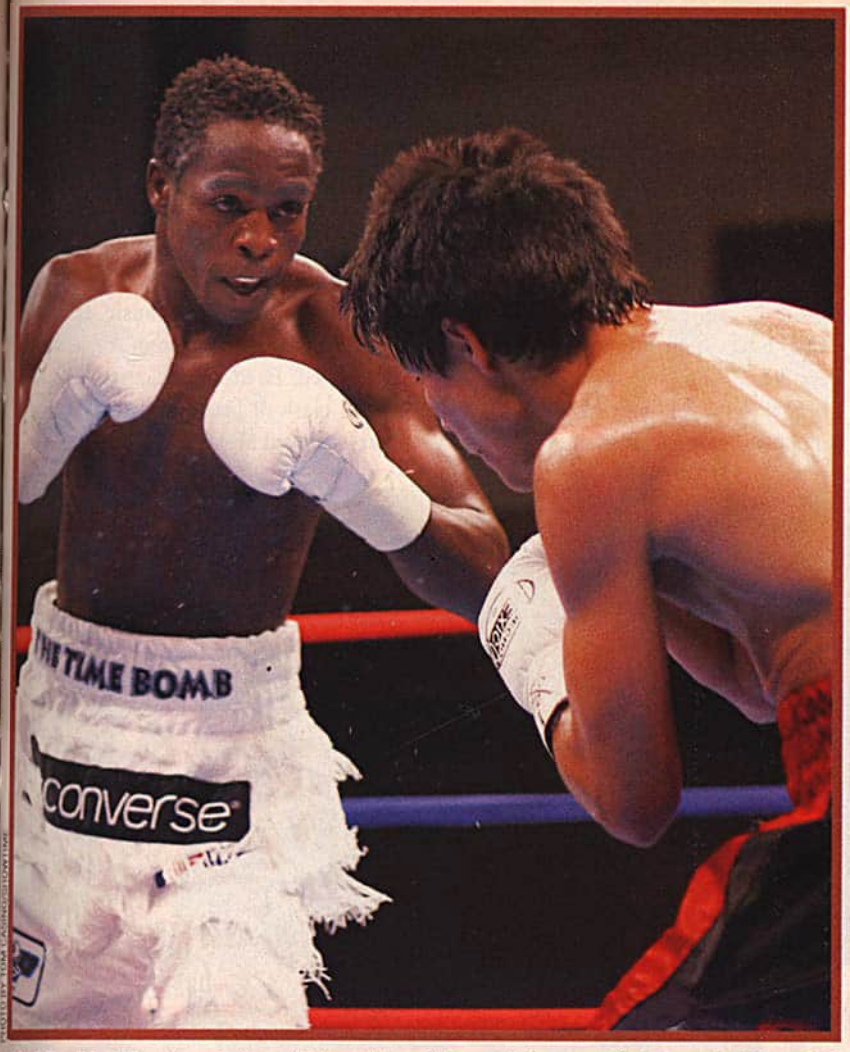
wagon since first seeing him beat Barcenas at Madison Square Garden. "I'm not saying that he's necessarily the next Hall of Famer; we simply don't know yet. But I know TV is looking for someone to make you want to watch, and Ndou is that sort of fighter. He's much more interesting than many of the fighters we see all the time."

The buzz surrounding Ndou grew with subsequent victories abroad, and the link with Lewis helped bring him back to the U.S. again. Adrian Ogun, Lewis' business agent, is also an executive of the British-based Sports and Entertainment Media group, which recently acquired Golden Gloves, the South African company that promoted Ndou and Mabuza. Promoter Gary Shaw, who is based in North Jersey, represents SEM in the U.S., and that's how Ndou and Mabuza wound up staying for a week at the Quality Inn in Newark, where they put the finishing touches on their preparation prior to flying to Oklahoma City.

"It's been a bit of a culture shock for them," said Jermain Craig, a South African journalist traveling with the fighters. "You know how in-your-face people can be here. You go into a store, and right away they say, 'If you want something, buy it. If you don't, get out.' But Phillip and Silence handled it well."



Mabuza drives a right to Javier Torres' body en route to a sixth-round TKO in a bout held in Oklahoma City. It was the unbeaten bantamweight's first fight in the United States and his 13th consecutive victory since turning pro.



"The Time Bomb" gets ready to explode on Vincent Burgo during a match that resulted in a third-round knockout victory for the hard-hitting South African junior lightweight. Taped highlights of the Oklahoma City bout were televised by Showtime.

The hard life Mabuza and Ndou led in South Africa prior to their emergence as top boxers prepared them well for most any set of circumstances. But although both had to overcome poverty and broken homes (Mabuza's father left when he was just three days old) they came from different geographical and cultural backgrounds.

Mabuza grew up in East Rand's Tsakane township, where he was raised by his grandmother, whose pension supported 12 relatives living under one roof. It was a deprived setting, and Mabuza searched for a positive outlet.

"I tried karate, and I failed," he said in a soft-spoken voice. "I tried weightlifting, and I failed. I was too small."

Finally, he tried boxing and found something at which he could excel. Mabuza went on to have 492 amateur bouts, losing just 17. He turned pro in November 1999 and has streaked to a 13-0 (12) start. Oddly enough, despite his success and prospects for the future, Mabuza is not particularly enamored with the Sweet Science.

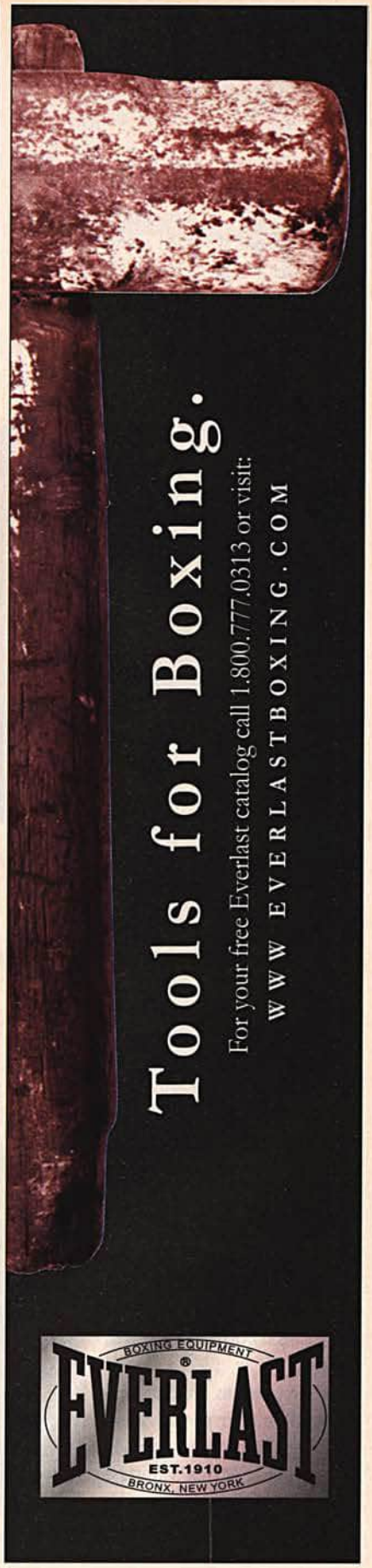
"I never really liked boxing," said Mabuza. "For me, boxing is a job, my source of income, my source of survival."

A deeply religious man, Mabuza wants to become a minister when his fighting days are over, and loves playing the piano and singing gospel songs. Staff and fellow guests at the Quality Inn were surprised and delighted when Mabuza coaxed a few impromptu tunes out of the hotel piano.

The laid-back Ndou is from the Venda bushland in the Northern Province, near the Zimbabwe border. It is an entirely different world from the urban township where Mabuza was raised.

"People went out in the fields with the

(Continued on page 44)



Ndou & Mabuza

(Continued from page 43)

cows and sheep," said Ndou when asked what life was like in remote Venda.

But it was far from an idyllic upbringing. Ndou's parents divorced when he was 10, and he was forced to work to make money for school. Survival was a daily battle, and it was under such demanding conditions that Ndou's fighting skills first surfaced.

"I enjoyed fighting," he said, the mayhem in his eyes belying the smile on his face. "I never lost a fight on the street in my life."

Like Mabuza, Ndou found his way into boxing following a flirtation with the martial arts. He proved an amateur sensation, winning the first of seven national featherweight titles at the age of 15. His globetrotting amateur career came to a climax at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, where he stopped Canada's Casey Patton in his first bout, only to lose a close decision to eventual gold medalist Somluck Kamsing in his second match.

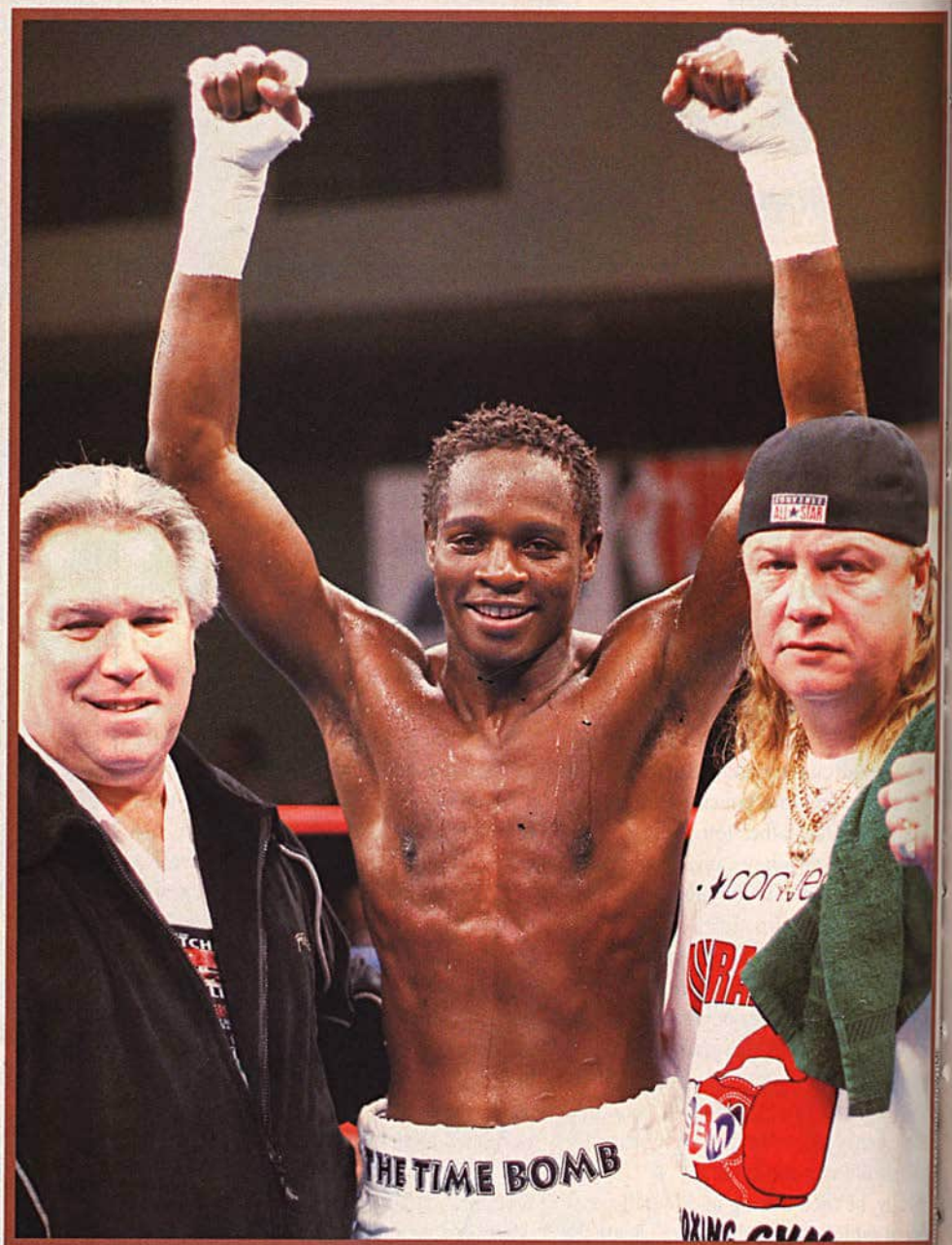
Ndou turned pro in September '97, stopping Nigel Leake in England, where the South African has fought eight of his 30 pro bouts. It was also where he suffered the lone loss in an overall record of 29-1 (28). That came against journeyman Anthony Campbell, who drilled Ndou on the way in with a big shot that resulted in a third-round TKO loss.

"I cried. Nick cried," recalled Ndou. "But Nick told me, 'Don't worry; we can still make it.'"

All indications are that they are well on their way to doing just that. The fight that made Ndou South Africa's hottest attraction was his grudge match with Cassius Baloyi, who was undefeated in 26 pro bouts and already world rated when they met before a capacity crowd at Carnival City in Brakpan on November 3, 2001. Ndou and Baloyi went at each other for 12 spellbinding rounds in what was dubbed South Africa's "Fight Of The Decade." It was an unbelievably fast-paced battle fought at a high skill level, and when Ndou took a unanimous decision, nobody argued.

As Mabuza turned pro almost two years after Ndou, he is not as well-established. Even so, he recently cracked THE RING's bantamweight ratings at number 10, following wins over Jose Sanjuanelo (KO 6) and Zolile Mbityi (KO 4) in South Africa. (Ndou is ranked sixth by THE RING at junior lightweight.)

Mabuza drew the tougher assignment in Oklahoma City. Opponent Javier Torres had had five times as many pro fights as Mabuza and came to win. But soon after Mabuza entered the ring to the sound of foot-stomping gospel music, it became apparent that the man from Argentina was outclassed. Even a cut caused by an accidental clash of heads in the second round barely slowed Mabuza down.



Ndou poses between promoter Gary Shaw and trainer/manager Nick Durandt following the Burgo victory. Durandt has trained Ndou throughout his pro career and says he "felt like he'd hit the lottery" when the fighter came to him.

Double trouble: American fans are sure to see more of Mabuza and Ndou. American TV is interested in the pair and they've shown a willingness to rumble with the best in their divisions.

"With lovely, deft footwork and a solid defense, Mabuza kept himself out of trouble and displayed his awesome array of punches, picking off his opponent and scoring at will," wrote Craig.

After six rounds of abuse, Torres, 34-18-9 (8), stayed on his stool.

Ndou, who Durandt says has difficulty finding quality opponents willing to face him, feasted on no-hope journeyman Vincent Burgo, 15-15-4 (4), plastering him all over the ring. He dropped Burgo once in the first and twice more in the third, the final time for the good.

Neither Ndou nor Mabuza's fights were shown live on Showtime, but taped highlights of The Time Bomb's slashing kayo of Burgo were played between the semifinal and the main event. Mabuza wasn't as fortunate, but still accomplished more than just adding another win to his resume. As much as wanting exposure to U.S. fans, the pair wished to impress America's boxing power brokers, and in that they both succeeded.

"Mabuza reminds me a lot of Azumah Nelson in his presence and physicality," said Jay Larkin, Showtime's boxing boss. "He has that glow, that energy that Nelson had."

Larkin's opinion of Ndou was equally upbeat.

"He is an enormous talent, with enormous potential. I love the way all these established guys at 130 are afraid to fight him, which I think is hilarious. Right now, his skills are not what they will become. Right now, I can think of three or more guys at junior light that I think would beat Phillip. I do not understand why [Acelino] Freitas and [Joel] Casamayor won't take a fight with him at this stage."

Larkin confirmed that Showtime wanted to televise Ndou's next bout, which could come as early as January 25. According to Durandt, Mabuza also attracted attention, and could garner an ESPN2 *Friday Night Fights* date in February.

Before Ndou and Mabuza headed back across the Atlantic, they challenged the biggest names they could think of: Ndou called out Casamayor, Freitas, and Floyd Mayweather; Mabuza asked for Tim Austin.

They won't get them, of course, not right away. But more significantly, nobody who has seen them fight laughed at their boldness. This was more of a scouting mission than a full-scale invasion, anyway. But Ndou and Mabuza will be back, their dream more alive than ever. ■

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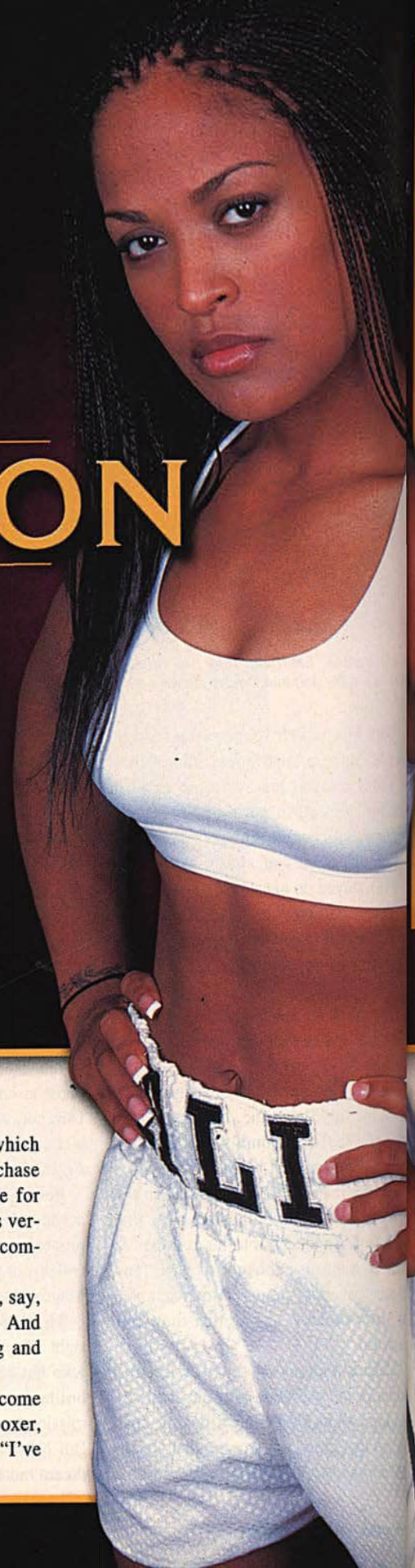
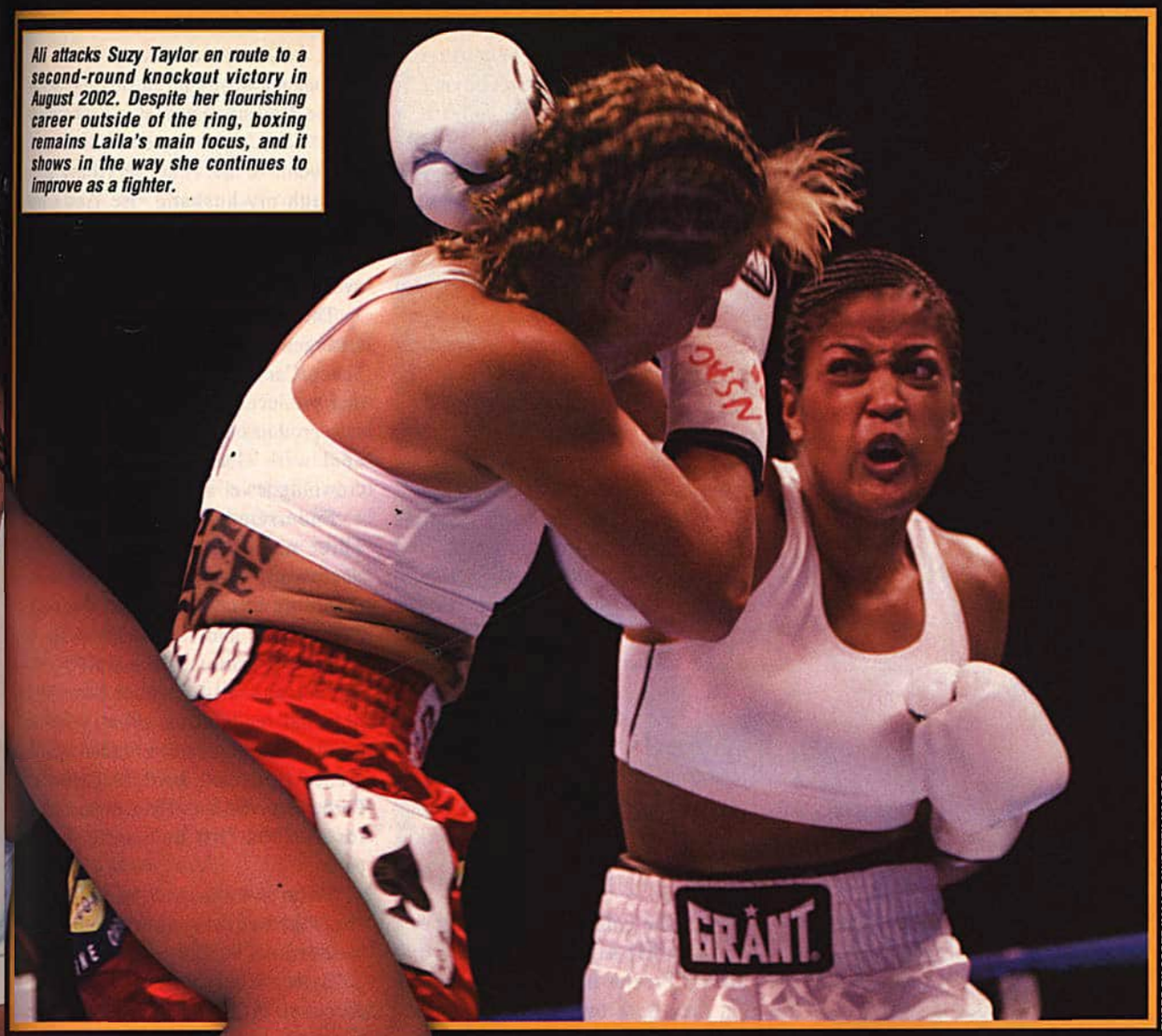




Ali attacks Suzy Taylor en route to a second-round knockout victory in August 2002. Despite her flourishing career outside of the ring, boxing remains Laila's main focus, and it shows in the way she continues to improve as a fighter.

PHOTO BY SCOTT HALLERAN/GETTY IMAGES

By David Mayo

She wheels up to a Las Vegas casino in a black Ford truck, which Laila Ali suggests the television viewing audience should purchase en masse. In that snapshot of pure capitalism, Ali does more for boxing than she ever could through verbal stumping for the women's version of the sport—something she unabashedly refuses to do—by becoming another of boxing's tiny handful of marketing crossovers.

She does not deny why Madison Avenue has pursued her and not, say, Bernard Hopkins. She is beautiful. She can fight. She is undefeated. And she happens to possess a surname that harkens the most endearing and enduring image in sports history.

"All the endorsements, the recognition, the appearances, they all come to me because I'm Muhammad Ali's daughter, and because I'm a boxer, and I'm winning, and people like me," said the 25-year-old Laila. "I've been Muhammad Ali's daughter my whole life, and it is a benefit in every single case. I'm happy I have his blood running through my veins. But I could be an undefeated fighter, and not Muhammad Ali's daughter, and I wouldn't get endorsements. Or I could be Muhammad Ali's daughter, but not a fighter, and I wouldn't get endorsements. It takes the entire package. It just is what it is."

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

She's everywhere you look, it seems. A milk moustache once curled her lip in magazine pages. She promotes hair-care products and boxing gear. People point and say, "Look, Ali's daughter." Boxing people, particularly women, point and say, "What has she done to deserve all this?"

Or at least that's what boxing people used to say, before a funny thing happened on the way to Laila Ali's novelty act ultimately getting smashed to smithereens: She learned how to fight. Really learned. Hired a full-time trainer to help her full-time husband/promoter guide her full-time job. Moved to Las Vegas. Beat everyone in sight. Got an ESPN2 main event in November and drew rave reviews, though she said the decisive eighth-round TKO of Valerie Mahfood to improve to 13-0 (10) was not her best performance. It's just that people see more of her on billboards than inside

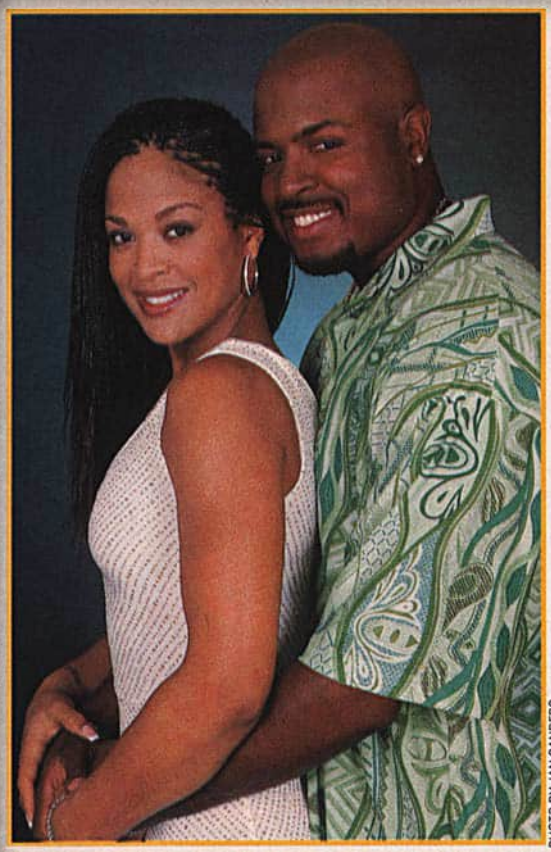


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

Husband Johnny McClain has done a good job of handling the business end of Laila's career, including helping her obtain several lucrative endorsement deals. Two-division former titleholder Roger Mayweather is now Laila's trainer.

the squared circle, and besides, she could've gotten Mahfood out much sooner but wanted to get some work.

She isn't just regarded as The Greatest's daughter anymore. She is, in fact, among the tiny handful of elite women fighters in these early pioneering years. Women's boxing doesn't have much of a history. But what it does have belongs to women like Christy Martin, Sumya Anani, Lucia Rijker, and now Laila Ali, all of whom have taken turns carrying the mantle of the sport in their own distinct fashions.

"I'm not the kind of woman who goes out and says, 'Oh, we're women, you should come out and see us box.' That's not my responsibility. I'm not going to do it, and I don't mind saying that," Ali said. "I don't think women are on the same level as men in boxing, and I think it'll be a long time before we are. But every time I'm on television, I'm promoting boxing in general, because I'm talking about boxing."

She reached a new level with her highly publicized 2001 win over Jacqui Frazier-Lyde, the daughter of Joe Frazier. But after a year off following that victory because of shoulder surgery, Ali's three fights in 2002 were the best evidence that her boxing arsenal has grown as varied as her endorsement portfolio, and she became widely regarded for her ability.

Roger Mayweather, the two-time former champion who trains Ali, knows a bit about boxing families and how far an established name can advance you within the sport.

"She had the name, but as far as boxing goes, that didn't mean anything until she proved she could carry the banner," Mayweather said. "Joe Frazier and Marvis Frazier have the same name, but they were two different fighters. Marvis couldn't carry that mantle."

The Ali family boxing business goes beyond father and daughter. Laila's husband, Johnny McClain, a cruiserweight of some note during the 1990s, oversees his wife's business affairs and serves as her promoter. Endorsement opportunities all funnel through McClain. Otherwise, we might never see Laila Ali outside a boxing ring.

"She doesn't even like doing the other stuff. I make her do that stuff," McClain said. "She's totally focused on boxing. The things you see outside the ring are all things I make her do."

McClain said his wife, "generates twice as much ... no, three times as much" outside the ring as inside it, which is the only reason Laila even perks up at the extra work.

"I make more money from endorsements than I do in boxing, so of course I'm interested in it," she said. "But I don't pursue endorsements; they come to me. And everything goes through my husband. He finds out what they want. How much do you pay, oh, okay, let's do it and get it over with. And that's how it goes."

The milk campaign was a one-shot arrangement. Ali also endorses Soft Sheen/Carson, a division of L'Oreal that produces the leading black hair-care products on the market, and has a deal with Grant Boxing. But her crowning jewel is the Ford deal.

Endorsement contracts from Big Three manufacturers aren't easily bestowed. They are reserved for recording artists like Janet Jackson, Toby Keith, and Aretha Franklin; or top-flight athletes like golf's Phil Mickelson—all of whom have high personal recognition value, spotless reputations, and, not coincidentally, product deals with Ford. McClain said Ford perceived his wife as a perfect fit for its 2002 "No Boundaries" campaign.

"Who is Laila Ali? She's beauty, she's strength—a person beyond boundaries," he said.

Harlan Werner, president and chief executive officer of Sports Placement Service, specializes in obtaining endorsement opportunities for athletes. Ali's nationally aired Ford commercial, Werner said, "conservatively would pay no less than $200,000, plus product. That's rock-bottom; you wouldn't possibly do it for any less than that."

Werner also has a unique perspective on how Laila Ali's surname can serve her. His Los Angeles agency is dedicated to a clientele of retired athletes including Mark McGwire, Joe Namath, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Jim Brown ... and Muhammad Ali.

"I've worked quietly behind the scenes with Muhammad and Lonnie Ali for about 15 years, and if anyone knows Muhammad's value, it's probably me," Werner said. "Ali is probably the most underutilized name brand

in history, when you stack it up against Disney, and Coca-Cola, and other products that have been society household names for the last 40 years. Ali derives emotions and feelings very few people can conjure up in anybody. He's been compared to the Pope, or Billy Graham, on a spiritual level. He means so much to so many people. And when consumers see his daughter, she reminds them of that."

Werner never has worked on behalf of Laila Ali, and notes that in his work for Muhammad Ali, he has encountered advertisers willing to accept a knock-off endorser, in lieu of the most famous sports figure in history, because the knock-off shares the same bloodlines and brand name.

"Laila looks good, she speaks well, she's very talented," Werner said. "But the reality is if you have a product and it will cost you $1.5-million to gain the endorsement services of Muhammad Ali, and Laila will do it for $300,000, you'll probably hire Laila because she reminds people of her father and she's a bargain at her price.

"Laila had an opportunity with the Ali name. But she also had talent, she worked her butt off in the gym, and she put in the time and effort. She's not doing it for ego. She's doing it to be the best she can be."

How good can she be? After less than four years boxing, one lost to the shoulder injury, Ali returned in 2002 with devastating bodywork and high-volume punching that punctuated all three wins last year over Shirvelle Williams, Suzy Taylor, and Mahfood, and demonstrated her completeness as a fighter.

"She's in a whole new zone now. She trains like a man and she throws punches like a man," Mayweather said.

Ali doesn't pull any punches regarding her super middleweight opposition, though. She wishes more women would step up to help legitimize her exploits, but admits, "The talent pool is in the lighter weight divisions. The women in my weight division—how should I say this?—they don't belong on any pound-for-pound lists."

Besides endorsing products, Laila has also done some public service gigs, including this one encouraging New York City's 1.5-million smokers to beat the cigarette habit.

PHOTO BY ARNALDO MAGNANI/GETTY IMAGES

So where does Ali belong on the women's pound-for-pound list? She said she doesn't consider that because it might affect her focus, "but if someone wants to put me in there, I wouldn't mind that."

Regardless, the relative anonymity of her previous life operating a nail salon in suburban Los Angeles is gone. It was sacrificed by her surname, by pursuing the sport that made her father famous, and by auctioning off her solitude to advertisers.

Sometimes, in a wistful moment, she finds herself wishing herself back there, but knows her days at the manicure table have ended.

"I miss the salon—not the clients, but having a stress-free career," she said. "I can't wait until I have that again. But that will be a while. It isn't time to get out of boxing now." ■

David Mayo covers boxing for the Grand Rapids (Michigan) Press and is a regular contributor to this magazine.

'30s MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMP

GORILLA JONES

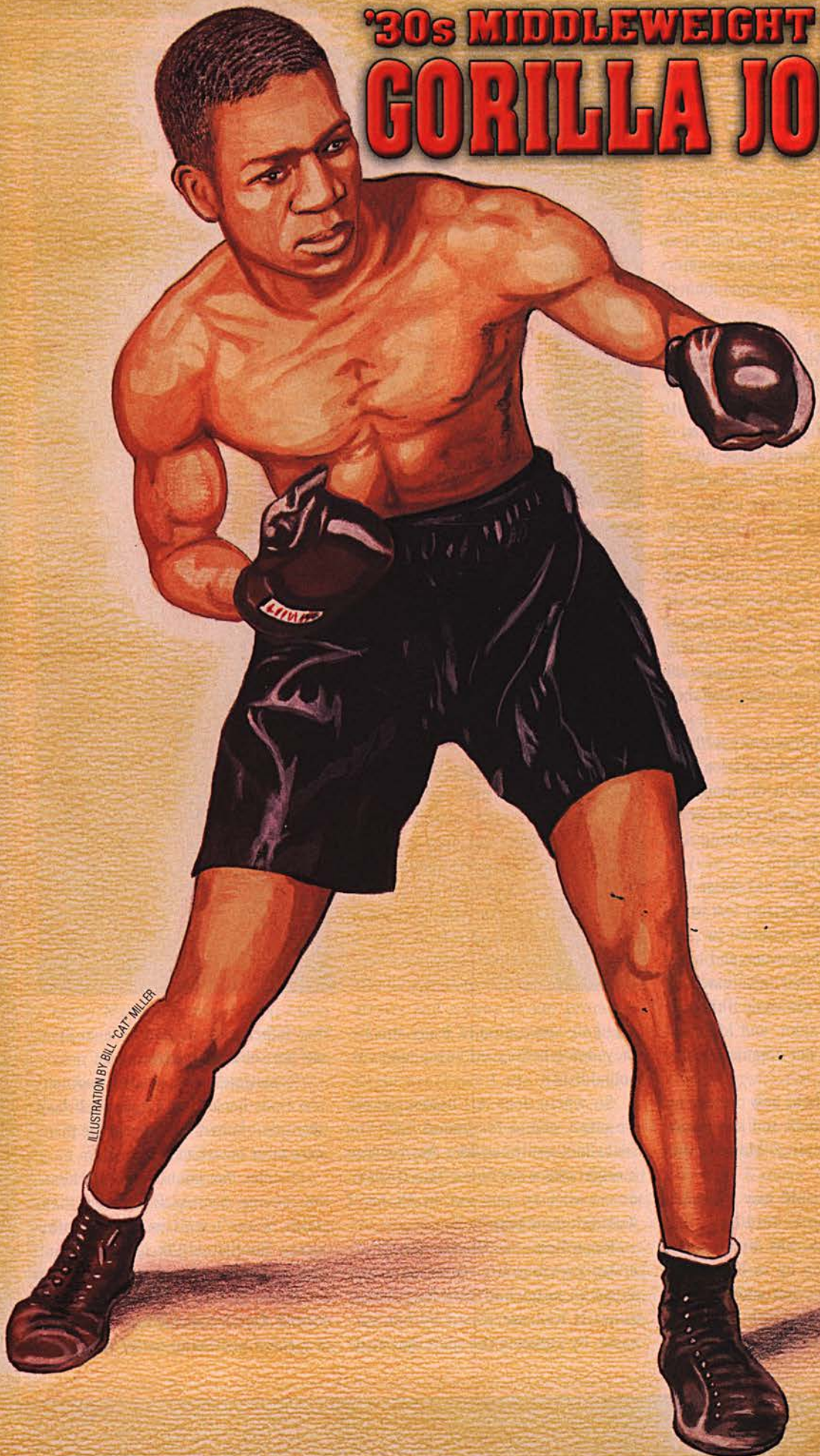


ILLUSTRATION BY BILL "CAT" MILLER

"Making White Boys Look Good" Was His Burden

By Pete Ehrmann

"Outside of Joe Louis and Barney Ross, there ain't any good fighters. You can throw the rest of 'em in the ocean."

When William Jones made that bold pronouncement in 1936, he was an unquestioned authority on boxing excellence as well as an expert when it came to going in the water.

But when Jones got wet it wasn't greed or his own deviousness that caused the splash, but rather the fact that, as *Milwaukee Journal* sports editor R.G. Lynch wrote a year earlier, Jones was "handcuffed, boxing under orders to make the white boys look good, holding up mediocre fighters that he could have put away."

It may be the instances of that dotting Jones' record are why the 1930s middleweight champion is largely remembered today more for being a consort of movie siren Mae West than for his astonishing talent. That's a legacy as unfortunate and demeaning as the nickname by which the classy ring stylist was known.

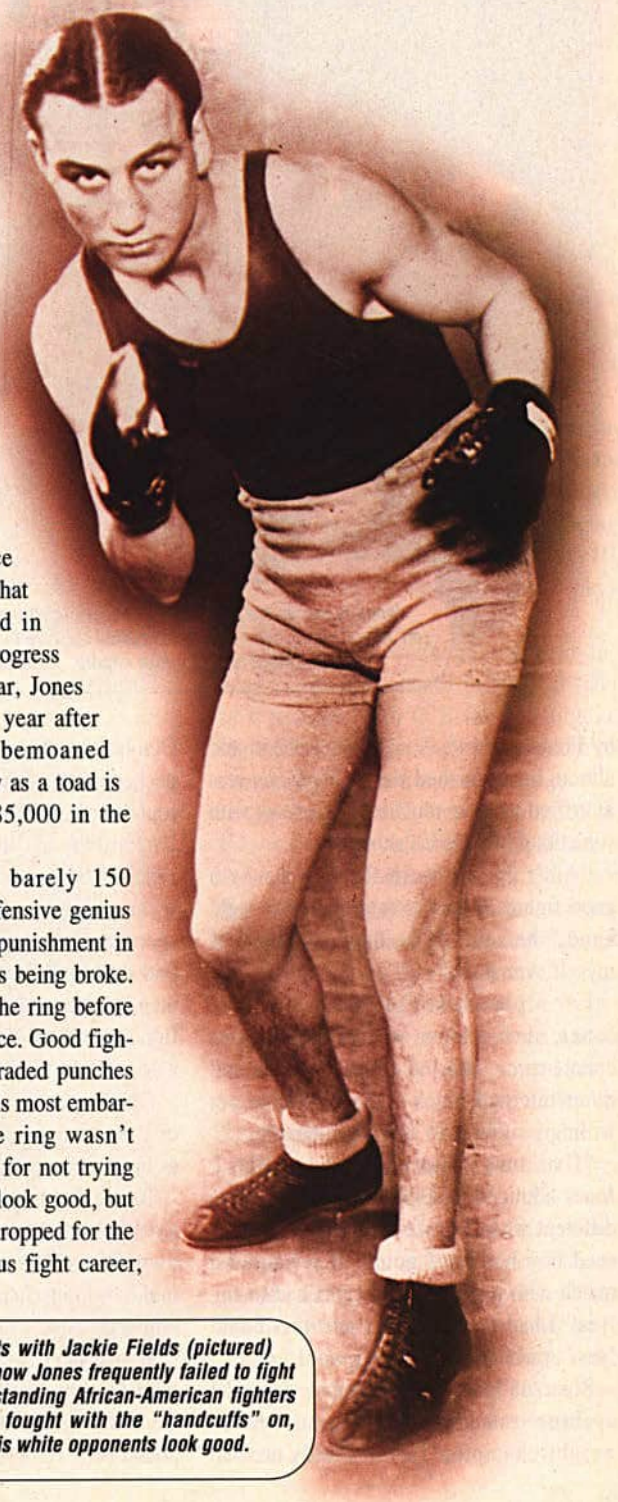
One old newspaper account said it was "Gorilla" Jones' "jungle dance in the ring that won him the nickname." Another claimed it was because of his unusually long arms. More likely, Jones himself lifted it off another Gorilla Jones, a black welterweight who had boxed in his native Memphis, Tennessee, when the young Jones went to Akron, Ohio, to fight on a card promoted by Suey Welch in 1927.

It wasn't fighting that kept Jones in Akron, but gambling. Even more passionate about shooting craps than jabs, Jones lost his first purse in a dice game, and went right back to Welch for another fight. This happened several more times, and Welch ended up taking a personal as well as financial interest in the young boxer.

"I was just a punk when I came to Akron, and he took hold of me," Jones recalled later. "I lived at his house. His folks were like mother and father to me. They brought me up and schooled me."

While Welch taught him between the ropes, the manager's father, who was Akron's police chief, put out the word that Jones was not allowed in local gambling dens. Progress was swift. Within a year, Jones was a headliner, and a year after that the man who'd bemoaned being "as free of money as a toad is of feathers" earned $85,000 in the ring.

Just 5'6" tall and barely 150 pounds, Jones was a defensive genius who considered taking punishment in a fight as mortal a sin as being broke. "I'll get thrown out of the ring before I'll get hurt," he said once. Good fighters, Jones said, never traded punches with the other fellow. His most embarrassing moment in the ring wasn't when he got tossed out for not trying or letting the other guy look good, but rather when Jones was dropped for the only time in his 100-plus fight career,



Jones' two 1929 bouts with Jackie Fields (pictured) were good examples of how Jones frequently failed to fight hard. Like so many outstanding African-American fighters of the era, Jones often fought with the "handcuffs" on, under orders to make his white opponents look good.

Jones is presented the NBA middleweight championship belt by former champion Mickey Walker (on Jones' right), who had relinquished the title to go after the heavyweight crown. Jones won the NBA tournament to find a new champ, stopping Italian Oddone Piazza in the sixth round.

by Freddie Steele. A right hand did it, and although he finished the fight, Jones was mortified to have touched the canvas with something besides his shoes.

"Ain't no reason in the world why a good fighter should ever get hit by a right hand," he said. "I've been ashamed of myself ever since."

For a proud, self-assured man like Jones, such a lapse was even harder to countenance than the ethical ones he and other talented black fighters of that era willingly suffered to survive in boxing.

"I've done some business in fights," Jones admitted in 1936. "But things were different when I broke in than now. A colored boy had hard going. If I wanted a match with a good white boy, I had to say 'yes.' I had to live—and sometimes I said 'yes.' And I always kept my word."

Some of Jones' performances were real eyebrow-raisers. When he and welterweight champion Jackie Fields met on October 21, 1929, in San Francisco, they pecked away at one another for 10 dreary rounds, and the decision went to Fields. On December 13 that year, a rematch at Boston Garden made their first encounter seem almost apocalyptic. The 10,000-plus spectators howled in disgust after the second round, and in the seventh, after both men had been warned several times to start fighting, referee Joe O'Connor declared it a no-contest.

Contemporary accounts, including that of Doc Almy in THE RING, fingered Jones as the more culpable party.

Black fighters got so few chances at world titles then that they created their own. Thus, Jones became the "colored middleweight champion" in 1929 by winning a decision over Jack McVey.

A year later, world middleweight champion Mickey Walker decided to go after the heavyweight title and gave up his 160-pound belt. To determine his successor, the National Boxing Association, which governed the sport in 36 states and a foreign country or two, put its imprimatur on a tournament held in Milwaukee. The plan was to invite "some 30 or 40 of the best middleweights" to compete for the NBA belt.

But the New York boxing commission decided to go its own way, and most top-ranked contenders accordingly sat back to see how things shook out. In the end, 14 boxers entered the NBA meet, including Jones, whose credentials were approved, warts and all, by respected Milwaukee boxing writer Sam Levy.

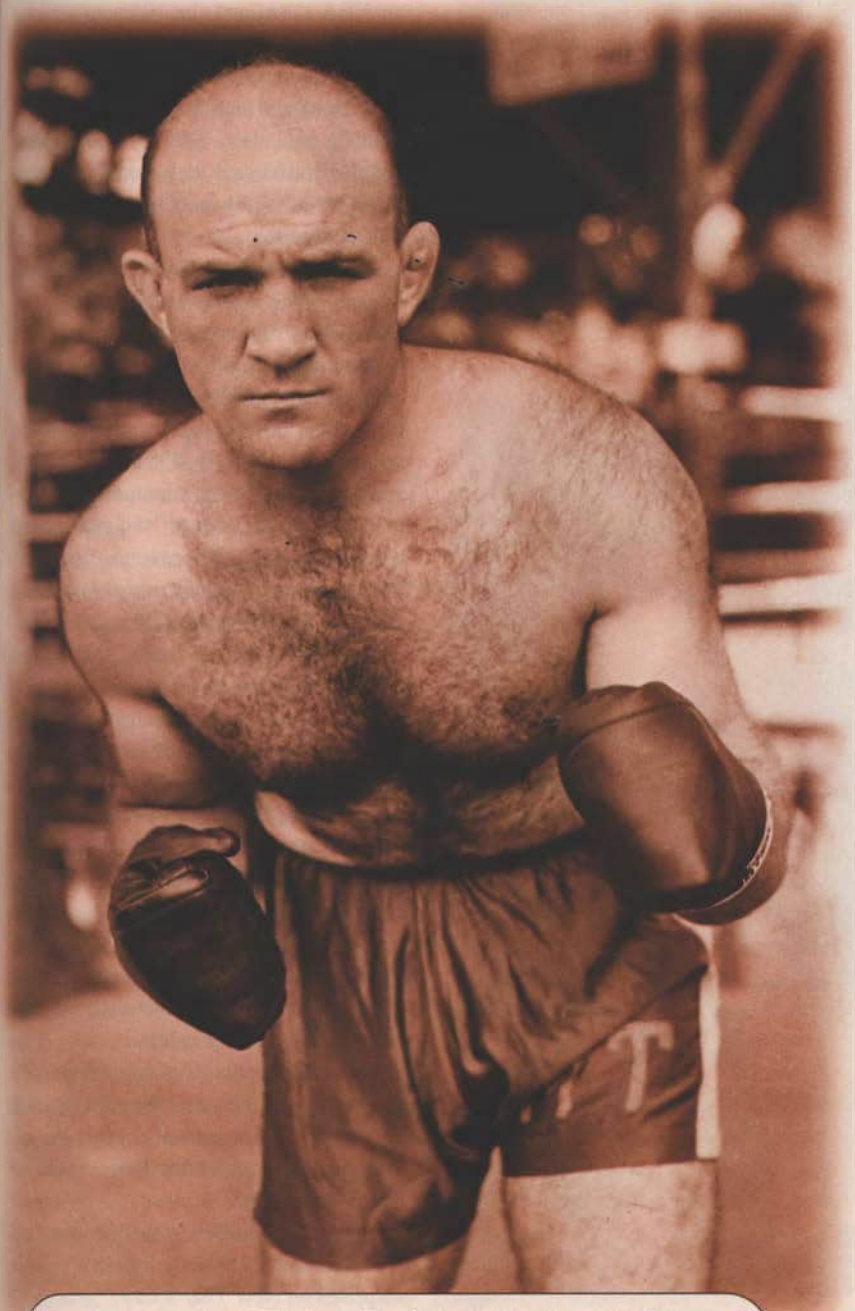
"He has never been knocked out. His record is studded with knockout victories. Several times he and his opponents have been chased from the ring, referees charging the boys with stalling. That's because Jones' style does not meet with the fancy of some officials and commissions. Then, too, there have been times, many times

when Jones has gone into the ring handcuffed. By this I mean he has been unable to open fire because he was under orders not to. If he violated such an agreement, he was threatened with boycott.

"Such conditions, fortunately, don't exist in the NBA tournament. It's a case of every man for himself. And the Gorilla is quite capable of handling matters, don't forget that."

But Jones' opening match on August 25, 1931, was no picnic, and after 10 rounds, one of the three officials voted for his opponent, Tiger Thomas, another talented black fighter. (Their bout was reported as being for Jones' "colored" title, which may explain why some record books mistakenly call it a world title match.)

Next, Jones cut up Clyde Chastain badly in their September 17 elimination match. "I don't want to hurt this boy, Mr. Referee," said Jones to the third man. "Why don't you stop the fight?" In the sixth, he did.



Frenchman Marcel Thil (pictured) took the title from Jones via dubious disqualification. Jones claims he was warned not to bet on himself because the fix was in. Many historians agree that this was indeed the case.

Like several other tournament entries, George Nichols of Buffalo, New York, was actually a light heavyweight who'd sweated down to 160 in hopes of picking up the NBA belt. Jones sent him back where he belonged with an easy decision win on November 3. (The following March, Nichols won the NBA 175-pound title in a tournament held to pick a successor to the stripped Maxie Rosenbloom.)

Sixteen days later, Jones whipped Frankie O'Brien in what was supposed to be his semifinal match. But in the other semi, Henry Firpo and Italy's Oddone Piazza fought to a bloody draw. While Piazza nursed his wounds, Jones took on Firpo and won a split decision.

In the January 25, 1932, title match, Piazza, a former amateur star with just 16 pro bouts, was totally outclassed and stopped in six rounds. Mickey Walker himself helped present the title belt to Jones, whose overriding concern was that he'd been too hard on the runner-up.

"Such a beating doesn't do a fighter any good," Jones said. "I had to do the same thing to Al Mello in Boston some time back, and he was ruined by the whipping. Before the fight, he was an intelligent fellow. Since then, he has broken down physically and mentally."

Apparently the new champion didn't want to take that chance in his next fight. In a rematch with O'Brien at Holyoke, Massachusetts, Jones was disqualified for "not trying" in a non-title bout.

On June 11, 1932, Jones lost the belt to France's Marcel Thil before 70,000 fans in Paris, when the referee disqualified him in the 11th round for hitting in the clinches. But the odor in that fight, Jones contended, came strictly from the other corner.

Before the fight, when he and Welch went to bet their purse money on a win for him, Jones said, they were warned not to because the fight was in the bag for the Frenchman.

"The night of the fight a Spanish fellow was referee," Jones said. "We were instructed that the first foul blow would bring a warning, and the second would lose the fight. I had Thil beat when all of a sudden in the 11th he grabbed his belly. The ref swung around and jabbered something at me in Spanish. I didn't even know what he said, but the fight was over and I lost on a foul."

Siding with the Yankee Doodle Dandy, the NBA refused to recognize Thil, and instead gave Jones another crack at its belt by matching him against Sammy Slaughter in Cleveland on January 30, 1933. Jones won in seven, and in the co-feature Ben Jeby of New York stopped Paul Pirrone.

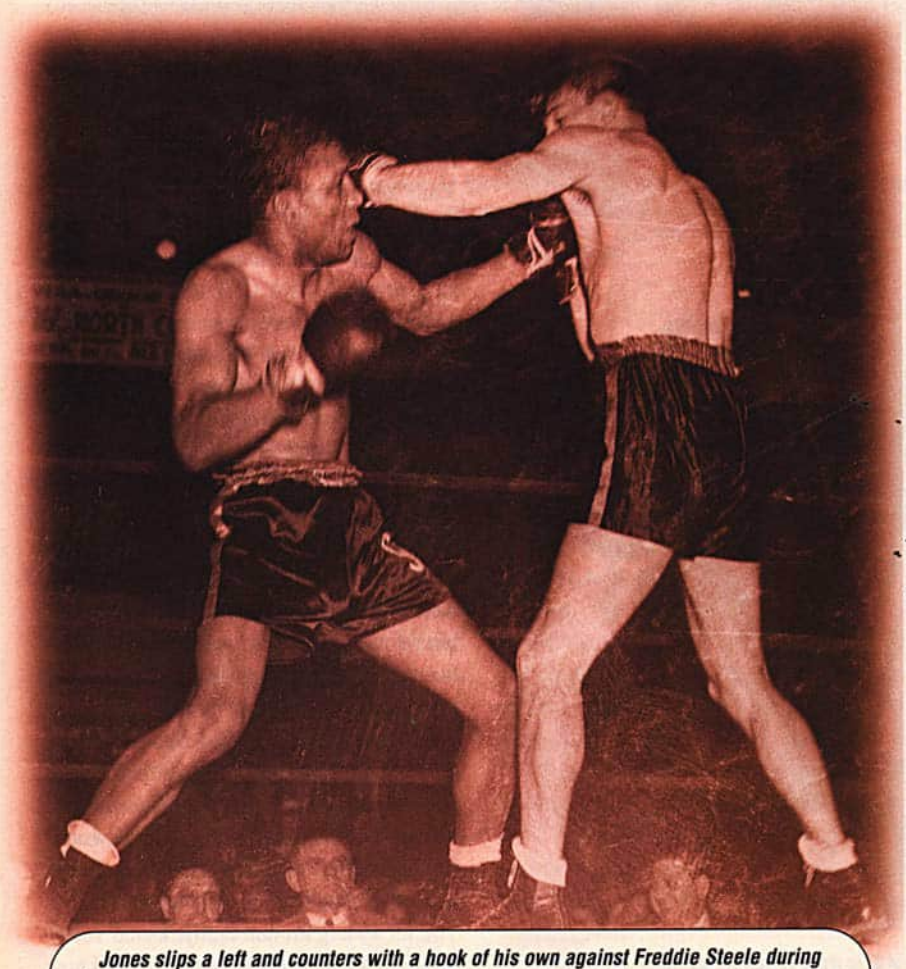
Jeby was recognized as 160-pound champion by the Gotham commission, and when he and Jones met on April 19 in Cleveland, it was hoped their non-title bout would "clear up a great deal of controversy as to which of the two fighters has the best claim to the title."

But instead it only created a whole new firestorm. It was such a putrid exhibition, with neither man showing any aggression, that after the referee declared no-contest in round six, a police riot squad was needed to get Jeby and Jones to their dressing rooms.

An Akron sportswriter said Jones' behavior was caused by fear of New York "gangsters." But Nat Fleischer, editor of THE RING, reported that a secret deal had been struck for a sham contest so a more profitable unification fight between Jeby and Jones could be staged later. Jones' only public statement fit either scenario.

"I know I will be blamed for this affair," he said. "I expect to be punished. I know that my many friends don't want to see me, nor do I want to see them right now. But while I have to stand the blame, I'm sure some people will understand that I am only a boxer and under contract to a manager, and that I must fight just as I am told."

On May 13, the NBA took back its belt on the grounds that Jones and Jeby "entirely disregarded the ethics of sportsmanship and permitted themselves to become parties to an act which, if continued, will assuredly deal a death blow to boxing." Both were suspended, but Jeby just returned to New York, where NBA edicts meant nothing, and lost his slice of the title to Lou Brouillard, who lost it to Vince Dundee, who lost it to Teddy Yarosz, who lost it to Babe Risko, who, in 1936, lost it to Freddie Steele—who signed a contract in December of that year to defend the title in Milwaukee on New Year's Day, 1937, against ... Gorilla Jones.



Jones slips a left and counters with a hook of his own against Freddie Steele during Jones' last major fight, which he lost via 10-round decision. Like so many of his bouts, a lot of people question whether or not Jones really tried to win.

Jones had stayed active over the preceding three years on the West Coast, out of the NBA's official reach. He cut as dashing a figure outside the ring as in, especially when walking the pet lion cub admirers gave him as a mascot. But Wisconsin was an NBA state, and the NBA notified the boxing commission there that Jones was still under indefinite suspension from the Jeby fight and demanded that the Steele bout be cancelled. When the Wisconsin commissioners said they would pull out of the NBA first, Jones' suspension was reluctantly lifted.

But worries about Jones continued to be fanned by the media, which saw the aging Gorilla as a "bad risk." Wrote Dick Collum in the *Minneapolis Journal*:

"Experts in boxing who judge Jones by form rather than by the record agree he has been the only truly brilliant middleweight since Mickey Walker renounced the championship. He has been a flawless boxer and a terrific puncher. His courage is not questioned and he is high in ring generalship—all in all, a nearly perfect fighting machine.

"Yet he has seldom fought up to his true ability and he has always been regarded as a safe man for any well-known white middleweight to meet, a most considerate fellow who could be trusted. Through the many years in which he has been the world's best middleweight, he has fought below his best in most of his important engagements.

"Now, along toward the end of his career, he is matched with a smartly managed champion whose interests are being safeguarded quite as carefully as the interests of other leading fighters whom Jones has not double-crossed, although he could have done so. There hasn't been a champion since Walker whom Jones could not have knocked out."

The Gorilla himself vowed with a flashing smile that everybody was "going to be surprised on New Year's Day."

True enough. People were surprised at how easily Steele handled him, and at that seventh-round knockdown that embar-

rassed Jones so much. It had been a contest for the first two rounds, but after that, wrote Sam Levy, "occasionally [Jones] engaged in a mild flurry of punching, but most of the time was content to protect himself."

In the ninth, Jones maneuvered the champion against the ropes on the side of the ring where the photographers were huddled with their cameras poised. "Put them cameras down, boys," he called out. "I'm not gonna get knocked down again." The decision for Steele was unanimous, but a few wondered if Gorilla had been up to his old monkey business.

Why, it was asked, after Jones caught Steele with a straight right in the second round that stunned the champion, did the challenger only throw roundhouse rights that sailed harmlessly over Steele's shoulder? And how come he seemed to let Steele pound him to the body when, as the *Journal's* Lynch wrote, "he could have put an end to it very easily with the shoulder block, a rudimentary defense known to all experienced boxers and used by Jones in every bout he has fought here?"

But when the Gorilla quickly sought redemption by taking on local favorite Frankie Battaglia in Milwaukee on January 29, he was welcomed back with loud huzzahs. "Jones' past has been forgotten, and even skeptics displeased with Gorilla's performance against Freddie Steele will be among those present," wrote Levy. "With the 'handcuffs' removed, Jones can be expected to play havoc with anybody his size."

Somebody should have been watching the referee. Although Jones dominated Battaglia throughout the 10-rounder, and even though third man Jim Keefe's scorecard read 52-48 for the ex-champion, the referee took it upon himself to punish Jones for what he considered a less-than-stellar effort by declaring the fight a draw.

Then came the really delicious part, at least for fans of irony. Because Jones didn't report that he had a fever going into the fight, the same commissioners who defied the NBA when it tried to stop Jones vs. Steele slapped the Gorilla with a six-month suspension to be honored by all NBA states.

So it was back to the West Coast for Jones, where his career gradually petered out. When he was done boxing, he became, according to whichever Mae West biography you care to believe, the sultry screen legend's bodyguard, chauffer, and/or bed partner. Jones himself never deigned to say which was the case. He lived rent-free in a cottage owned by West, above whose address plate in front there perched a little rubber gorilla, until death came at age 75 on January 4, 1982.

"Why don't ya come up and see me some time." Apparently Jones took movie star Mae West up on her famous invitation and became her bodyguard/chauffer/lover.

In 1994, Jones, 96-20-13 (54) with 9 no-decisions and 2 no-contests, was inducted into the World Boxing Hall of Fame. Moralists might argue that some of the Gorilla's performances make him a poor Hall of Famer. But serious historians know better, and, like the man said, the rest you can throw in the ocean. ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

David Tua KO 2 Russell Chasteen
Vitali Klitschko KO 10 Larry Donald
Michael Grant KO 4 James Walton
Corrie Sanders KO 2 Otis Tisdale
Duncan Dokiwari KO 1 Andy Sample
Luan Krasniqi KO 1 Thomas Williams
Bob Mirovic KO 3 Auckland Aumatagi
Jean-Francois Bergeron KO 5 Brian Nix
T.J. Wilson KO 1 Milan Hanrich
Richel Hersisia KO 2 Eduardo Sandivares
Audley Harrison KO 1 Shawn Robinson
Calvin Brock KO 2 Frank Edmundton

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Johnny Nelson D 12 Guillermo Jones
O'Neil Bell KO 9 Arthur Williams
Virgil Hill W 12 Joey DeGrandis
Julian Letterlough D 6 John Douglas
Pietro Aurino KO 5 Turan Bagci
Carlos Cruzat W 10 Hector Sotelo
Ernest Mateen Tech. Win 9 Uriah Grant
Frederic Serrat KO 7 Rene Janvier
Krzysztof Wlodarczyk KO 12 Ismael Abdul
Rydell Booker KO 2 Art Jimmerson
Michael Bennett W 8 Alonzo Wright

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Jorge Castro W 10 Etienne Whitaker
Silvio Branco KO 2 Anton Lascek
Stipe Drews W 12 Lee Manuel Ossie
Troy Weaver KO 1 Louis Sergeant
Rodney Toney KO 7 Jonathan Young
Darnell Wilson KO 8 Dana Rucker
Pierre Karam W 8 Jeff Tupu

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Sven Ottke W 12 Rudy Markussen
(Retains IBF Title)
Mads Larsen W 8 Roberto Coelho

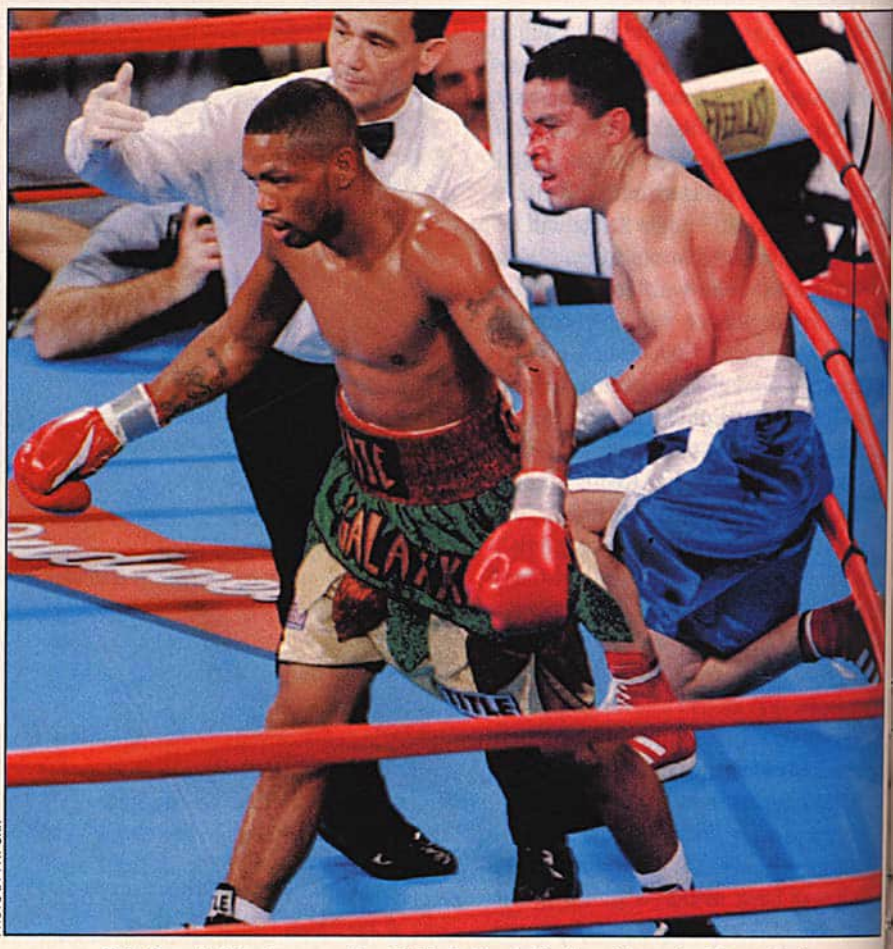


PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Nate Campbell had an easy time in his lightweight mismatch against Renor Rojas

Robin Reid KO 2 Mondi Mbonambi
Yory Boy Campas KO 2 George Klinesmith
Mikkel Kessler W 12 Dingaan Thobela
Mikkel Kessler KO 1 Dean Williams
Brian Magee W 12 Jose Spearman
Jeff Lacy W 12 Ross Thompson
Danny Green KO 3 Nico Torriri
Julio Cesar Vasquez W 10 Enrique Campos
Ricardo Cortes KO 1 Charles Lucas
Vitali Tsypko KO 7 Vincenzo Imparato
Laila Ali KO 8 Valerie Mahfood

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Antonio Perugino W 6 Didier Mupeko
Rodney Jones KO 2 Paulino Avita-Martinez
Fernando Hernandez W Disq. 3 Epifanio Mendoza
Jorge Sclarandi W 10 Julio Cesar Vasquez
Carlton Holland W 8 Shakir Ashanti
Gary Lockett W 8 Viktor Fesetchko
Marcos Silvano Diaz KO 6 Javier Mamani
Jermain Taylor KO 4 Johnny Rivera
Sechew Powell W 4 Larry Brothers
Bear Sanders KO 1 Mickey Stackhouse

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Andrew Lewis KO 1 Oscar Delgado
Michael Lerma KO 5 Candy Robertson
Nader Hamdan KO 2 Sikat Pasaribu
Vincent Vuma W 12 William Gare
Armando Velardez W 8 Jose Luis Cruz
Mihaly Kotai W 8 Ruben Perez
Josh Clenshaw W 10 Peter Petrou
Bradley Pryce W 4 Craig Lynch
Joseph Brady W 10 Anthony Showman
Rasheem Brown KO 2 Gary Grant
Anthony Thompson KO 2 Richard Lee Hall
Dante Craig KO 2 Leo Edwards

WELTERWEIGHTS

Sharmba Mitchell W 10 Vince Phillips
Arturo Gatti W 10 Micky Ward
Jawaid Khaliq W 12 Roman Dzuman
Julio Diaz KO 4 Felix St. Kitts
Hector Camacho Jr. KO 1 Freddie Ladd
Paolo Roberto W 12 Raul Bejarano
James Hare KO 1 Earl Foskin
Julian Holland KO 7 Joy Ali
Phillip Holiday W 10 Fred Kinuthia
Joseph Makaringe KO 11 Colin Mayisela
Alessandro Duran W 4 Francesco Cioffi
Ernie Zavala KO 5 Justo Almazon
John Bailey KO 3 Abdul Blackburn
Fred Cadena KO 8 Brad Jensen
Paulie Malignaggi W 8 Paul Delgado
Jeffrey Resto KO 1 Mambea Bakari
Dmitriy Salita KO 1 Ron Gladdin

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Junior Witter KO 2 Giuseppe Lauri
Miguel Cotto KO 7 Ubaldo Hernandez
Allan Vester W 12 Lawrence Ngobeni
Cosme Rivera KO 10 Pedro Saiz
Luis Alberto Santiago D 12 Ivan Robinson
Gary Ryder W 12 Wayne Rigby
Lovemore Ndou KO 6 Saknirun Twins Gym
Gianluca Branco W 6 Michel Raynaud
Tadashi Yuba KO 1
Chodchoi 13 Coin Tower
Luis Perez W Disq. 3 Eddie Estrella
Juan Jose Mendez KO 4 Ray Sanchez

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Paul Spadafora W 12 Dennis Holbaek
(Retains IBF Title)
Nate Campbell KO 5 Renor Rojas
Julien Lorcy KO 4 Mustapha Abahraoui
Lamar Murphy D 10 Victoriano Sosa
Ernesto Zepeda KO 7 Juan Valenzuela
Humberto Soto KO 12 Emidgio Gastelum
Jorge Noriega KO 7 Diego Gimenez
Eleazar Contreras KO 5 Courtney Burton
Juan Diaz KO 4 Arthur Cruz

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Jesus Chavez KO 6 Johnny Walker
Phillip Ndou KO 3 Vincente Burgo
Jorge Barrios KO 6 Rodolfo Rolon
Juan Arias KO 6 Nelson Medina
Mzonke Fana KO 10 Eric Odumasi
Bobby Pacquiao W 12 Baby Lorona
Kevin Kelley KO 5 Johnny West-Gutierrez
Gary St. Clair D 10 James Swan
Janos Nagy W 10 Laszlo Bognar
Mike Anchondo KO 2 Isidro Tejedor
Darling Jimenez KO 2 Corey Alarcon

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Erik Morales W 12 Paulie Ayala
(Wins Vacant WBC Title)
Guty Espadas W 12 Bones Adams
Michael Brodie W 12 Luis Fuente
Spend Abazi W 8 Athanas Nzau
Spend Abazi W 8 Anthony Martinez
Nobuto Ikehara W 10 Toshinobu Nakatani
Reymundo Beltran KO 9 Sean Fletcher
Tommy Browne W 12 Daniel Hoskins

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Yoddamrong Sithyodthong KO 3 Melvin Aryather
Marcos Licona W 10 Ricardo Medina
Fabio Oliva W 12 Jorge Espindola
Zolani Marali W 12 Oupa Lubisi
Masakazu Sugawara W 10 Jess Maca
Clarence Vinson W 10 Idelfonso Martinez
Jose Aguiniga KO 2 Jose Sarabia

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Johnny Bredahl W 12 Leo Gamez
(Retains WBA Title)
Martin Castillo KO 8 Keyri Wong
Silence Mabuza KO 6 Javier Torres
Malcolm Tunacao KO 3 Kazuyoshi Niki
Hideki Todaka W 10
Loedsiam Kiatkriengkrai
Sandro Oviedo W Disq. 2 Vernie Torres
Poonsawat Kratingdanggym KO 10 Simon Ramoni
Nobuaki Naka KO 6 Noboru Fukyama
Hiroaki Murakoshi W 10 Jaime Acerda
Alejandro Barrera KO 4 Luis De La Rosa
Jose Navarro KO 5 Benito Zepeda

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Peter Culshaw W 12 Ncedo Cecane
Hayato Asai D 10 Shin Ogata
Hideyasu Ishihara KO 8 Dongkil Shin

FLYWEIGHTS

Pongsaklek Wonjongkam W 12 Hidenobu Honda
(Retains WBC Title)
Irene Pacheco W 12 Alejandro Montiel
(Retains IBF Title)
Brian Viloria W 12 Alberto Rossel
Sornpichai Pisnurachank W 6 Marcelo Alquizar
Randy Mangubat Tech. Win 9 Bert Cano
Wandee Chor Charoen W 6 Jun Pader
Vic Darchinyan KO 3 Albert Resilay
Anis Roga W 10 Jerry Pahayahay
Takefumi Sakata KO 2 Jinho Kim
Roselito Campana W 12 Archel Villamor
Christophe Rodriguez W 10 Franck Gorjux

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Jorge Arce KO 3 Agustin Luna
(Retains WBC Title)
Marvin Tampos KO 7 Deeden Kengkarun
Masato Hatakeyama W 10 Jun Kitano

STRAWWEIGHTS

Joma Gamboa W 10 Daisuke Iida
Muhammad Rachman W 10 Benjie Sorolla
Jorge Mata W 12 Jairo Arango
Ivan Calderon W 12 Lee Sandoval
Hiroshi Matsumoto KO 9 Jojo Riones
Ernesto Rubillar W 8 Kid Orais

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PRESENTS

The RING

FIGHTER of the MONTH

The nickname "El Terrible" is meant to be complimentary, but during his 2001 campaign, Erik Morales was just plain terrible—the uncomplimentary definition—compared to the high standards he had previously set. He needed a little help from the judges to beat Guty Espadas, and he struggled far more than expected against lightly regarded In Jin Chi. But just when it seemed El Terrible might be gone forever, Morales bounced back with an excellent performance in a controversial defeat to Marco Antonio Barrera and, most recently, a dominant win over Paulie Ayala that may go down as the defining display of the popular Mexican's career.

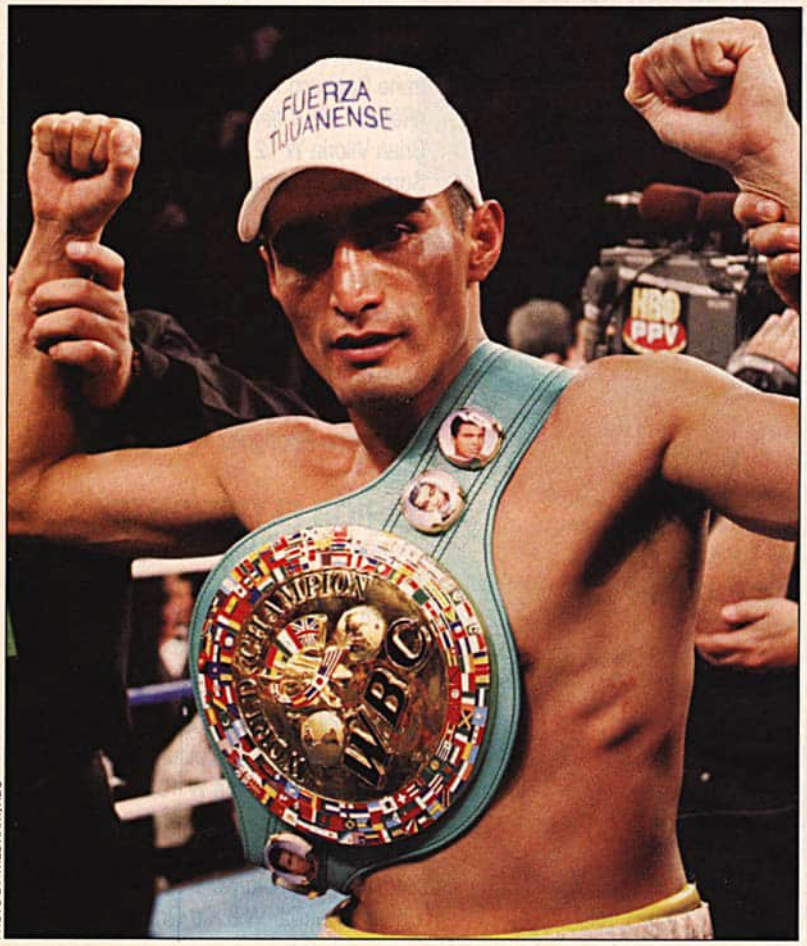


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Ayala's had a few close calls in the past, but never has he been convincingly beaten. Against Morales, however, he was outclassed every step of the way. The jab, the straight right through the guard, the left hook, and especially the right uppercut—they were all doing their part to turn Ayala's face into a crime scene. And the tough Texan could do nothing in return, as Morales was suddenly the modern-day Willie Pep, slipping or blocking nearly every punch that came his way. Even though he took off a round or two toward the end, Morales fought an almost perfect fight, mixing boxing and bombing better than he ever has before.

El Terrible is back, and the only thing terrible about Morales' fight on November 16 at Mandalay Bay was how it turned out for poor Ayala.

• • • •

Erik Morales

RINGSIDE REPORTS

Paul Spadafora W 12 Dennis Holbaek

Newell, West Virginia: Enjoying the comfort of a near-sellout hometown crowd at the Mountaineer Race Track & Resort, Spadafora was able to continue the trend of efficient but unimpressive defenses of the IBF lightweight title, turning back Danish challenger Holbaek by unanimous decision.

Relying on notable technical skills, Spadafora, 135, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is able to shave rounds closer than a deli slicer. But he showed none of the pizzazz that excited the boxing world when he first won the IBF belt in 1999, and, hometown scoring aside, the fight was a little closer than it was expected to be. At least his corner didn't try to whitewash anything.

"Everybody can't go to the line and fight a great fight every night," admitted trainer Jesse Reid.

"Have we all seen Paul look bad? Yeah, we've all seen Paul look bad," manager Al McCauley mused.

The fighter himself was most direct. "I give myself a D," Spadafora confessed after his seventh successful title defense. "I had a bad night, a horrible night."

Little happened in the first couple of rounds, other than that Holbaek, 134¾, established that it wasn't going to be a turkey shoot. But the Dane proved to be more pestiferous than challenging. A compact, flat-footed stalker, he was curiously difficult for "Spaddy" to hit, but he threw few punches and never put anything together. In the fourth, Holbaek, 29, had his best round when a surprise right momentarily staggered the 27-year-old titleholder, and an abrasion formed under his right eye.

PHOTO BY CHUCK SAUR

Spadafora sneaks in a left to Holbaek's chin

"He caught me with a good shot," Spadafora admitted later. "I was only hurt for two or three seconds. It made me get off my feet a little bit."

But Spadafora, 36-0 (14), exemplifies the adage, "Fool me twice, shame on me." He immediately established control at the start of the fifth, finally giving fans something to cheer about, and swept the next four rounds on all the judges' cards. The eighth was his most effective, and in the ninth he put on a touch of the trademark showboating that they love in Pittsburgh and nowhere else. Still, action was never more than a sideshow to "ring generalship," and ring announcer Pedro Fernandez had to repeatedly exhort the crowd to make some noise for TV.

Holbaek, 43-2 (22), pursued with some urgency to keep it interesting through the final rounds, but his efforts got him nowhere. He later blamed 21 months of inactivity while waiting for the title shot for his inability to effectively pursue.

Holbaek's corner seemed to expect a Danish decision, but that was not to be. Debra Barnes (USA) scored 118-110, while Larry Doggette (USA) and Gary Wolfe (USA) had it 117-111. THE RING scored it 117-113. The referee was Dave Johnson (USA).

Television: Cox In Demand Pay-Per-View

Promoters: Michael Acri Boxing Promotions, West Virginia Sports Promotions, DiBella Entertainment

(11-9-02)

J. R. Jowett

Lamar Murphy D 10 Victoriano Sosa

Newell, West Virginia: The relatively tame main event that was to follow was perhaps made more palatable by a rip-roaring semifinal to the Spadafora-Holbaek bout. By the time the gunsmoke had cleared on a sizzling draw between Murphy and Sosa, fans had already gotten their money's worth and were probably ready to settle in for a relatively easy win by hero Spadafora.

Murphy, 135, Miami, Florida, was a late sub for Angel Manfredy and was intended as a prop for Sosa, 135, Dominican Republic, who has been marking time ever since subjecting Spadafora to by far his toughest defense, a very close decision in March 2000 that saw Spadafora floored twice in the third round. Murphy squelched that image from the first round, as he got off to a fast start with movement and penetration. The underdog attacked using uncommon defensive skills to slip inside the elongated Sosa's range, then scorched him with straight punches set up by a snapping hook off the jab.

Sheer desperation kept the favorite in the fight, as he attempted to cut down Murphy's movement by trapping him on the ropes, then pouring it on. Blazing exchanges were the result, with Murphy more than holding his own as he ducked and slipped most of Sosa's frenzied attack while firing back counter hooks. Only in the third did Sosa possibly win one of these early exchanges, when just before the bell, two crashing rights shook Murphy, 27-6-1 (19). It was the only high point of the first five rounds

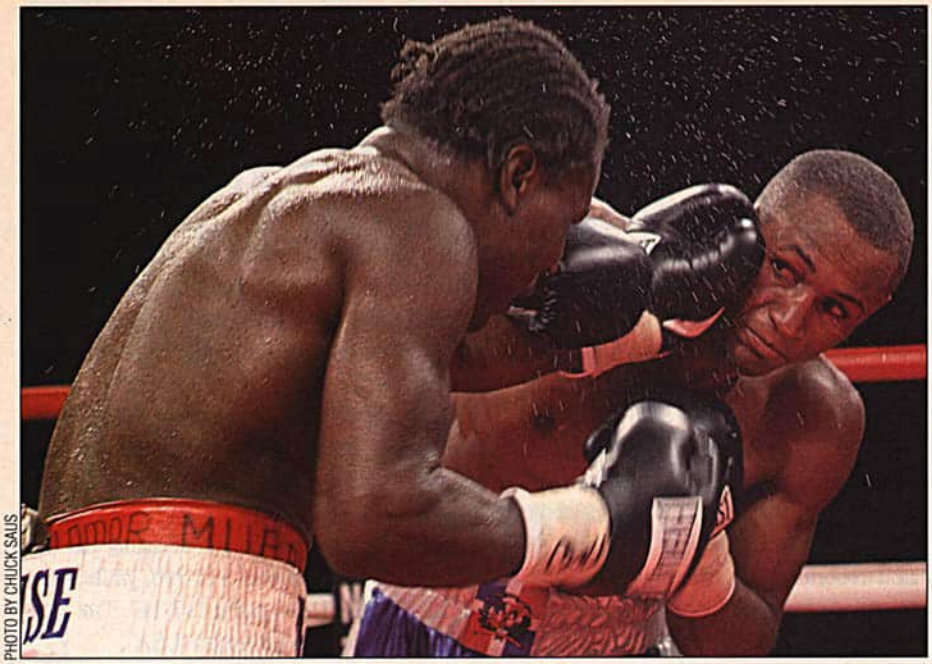


PHOTO BY CHUCK SALUS

Murphy and Sosa exchange blows en route to entertaining draw

for Sosa, and it may have salvaged the fight for him.

The second half became a whole new fight. The determined Sosa, 34-2-2 (25), was still there and trying, while Murphy faded a bit. Instead of relentlessly attacking, the 29-year-old American began to buy time, enabling Sosa, 28, to make more use of his range and long rights. The Dominican crept back into the contest so that the final round became critical, and both seemed to know it. They closed the show with frenetic crowd-pleasing action. Sosa landed some of the harder shots, but the revived Murphy edged out the round on volume. Paul Silverman (USA) scored it 95-95 (the same as THE RING), while Dana DePaolo (USA) and Tom Miller (USA) split 96-94 each way, DePaolo for Murphy and Miller for Sosa. Tim Wheeler (USA) refereed.

Television: Cox In Demand Pay-Per-View

Promoters: Michael Acri Boxing Promotions, West Virginia Sports Promotions, DiBella Entertainment

(11-9-02)

J. R. Jowett

Oscar Larios KO 1 Willie Jorrin

Sacramento, California: It may have been nearly two years since his first encounter against WBC super bantamweight titleholder Jorrin, but the wait proved more than worthwhile for Larios. Gaining sweet revenge for a disputed decision loss to Jorrin in January 2001, Larios celebrated his 26th birthday by stopping Jorrin in just 1:28 of the first round at Arco Arena.

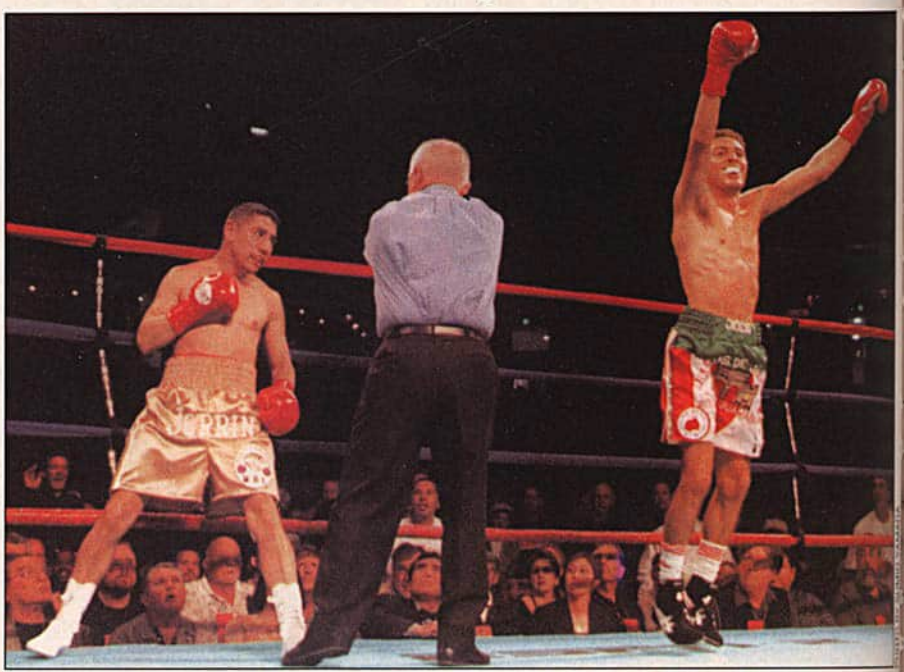
Jorrin, 122, Sacramento, had fought only once since his first fight against Larios, struggling to a 12-round draw in Tokyo against Osamu Sato in February '02. Larios, on the other hand, had fought six times since losing to Jorrin, all of them victories, the most important when he subbed for the injured Jorrin to stop Israel Vazquez in 12 rounds in May.

Larios, 122, Mexico, was the aggressor from the opening bell, backing Jorrin up and probing with several jabs. Jorrin, two inches shorter than Larios at 5'5", attempted to land his own jab, only to have Larios connect with a left-right that backed Jorrin off. Larios followed with a right to the body as Jorrin backed away.

Larios then pursued Jorrin to the ropes where, after two jabs, he jarred Jorrin with a right to the jaw. Jorrin, making his third defense of the WBC belt, tried to fight his way back to mid-ring, but as he attempted to land a right to the head, Larios moved to his own right, then unleashed a right uppercut that caught Jorrin under the chin and sent him crashing to the canvas. Jorrin, badly hurt, instinctively arose at the count of seven. An overeager Larios, missing wildly with a right to the head, ended up sprawling over Jorrin. Jorrin's respite was only momentary, however; when he rose again, Larios backed him into a neutral corner, then unloaded with both hands, landing approximately a dozen punches before referee James Jen-Kin (USA) called a halt.

Afterward, a jubilant Larios, 46-3-1 (33), admitted that he was surprised that the bout had ended so quickly.

"The plan was to pressure Jorrin for about seven or eight rounds, and he'd have no legs after that," Larios said. He called the win



Larios exults after quick stoppage of Jorrin

"my best birthday present ever."

Jorrin, 28-1-1 (12), mildly protested the stoppage, but added, "That's boxing. So I lost my first fight ... I'm okay." The 32-year-old Jorrin didn't rule out a possible third fight with Larios, but admitted that making 122 pounds has become difficult. "If I continue fighting, it will probably be at 126 pounds. I'm going talk it over with my family before I make any decisions."

Larios, meanwhile, was scheduled to fight again on the January 16 debut of the new HBO Latino *Boxeo de Oro* program in a non-title bout against Marcos Licona.

Television: ESPN2

Promoter: Don Chargin Productions

(11-1-02)

Steve Nicolaisen

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Arce blasts overwhelmed Luna with a right

Johnny Bredahl W 12 Leo Gamez

Copenhagen, Denmark: Disappointment was etched into the angular features of Bredahl, 116¾, Denmark, after a performance he told his trainer, Freddie Roach, was the worst of his career. Gamez, 116¼, Venezuela, held titles in four divisions, but, at 39, his best fighting days are behind him, and Bredahl envisioned a more conclusive victory before his home crowd at the Falkoner Center in his first defense of the WBA bantamweight title.

The 34-year-old Bredahl boxed within himself, maintaining control with a productive left jab that regularly penetrated Gamez' guard and gained him a lead on the judges' scorecards. The mandatory challenger was game throughout, but never threatening. The beltholder threatened more ruthless terms of engagement in the fourth, connecting solidly to head and body and appearing to hurt the veteran Venezuelan.

Gamez came back and connected effectively with several right hands in the ninth, Bredahl paying for losing concentration. But reminded during the minute's rest by Roach of his responsibilities, Bredahl, 53-2 (26), countered consummately in the 10th, and Gamez, 34-9-1 (26), looked again like the old man he has become. Still, the challenger rallied in the final two rounds as Bredahl took it easy once more, making the cards read closer than they might have been. Franco Priami (Italy) saw it 117-113, Charlem Prayadsab (Thailand) had it 117-112, and Samuel Conde (Puerto Rico), being perhaps overly sympathetic toward the challenger, had it 115-114 for Bredahl. THE RING scored 117-112. The referee was Steve Smoger (USA).

Next for Bredahl may be a trip to Japan to face former 115-pound beltholder Hideki Todaka. As for Gamez, who had announced his retirement in March '01 after his previous defeat, it is believed he may quit for good now.

Promoter: Bettina Palle

(11-8-02)

Brian Doogan

Jorge Arce KO 3 Agustin Luna

Las Vegas, Nevada: Arce, 108, dominated Luna, 107½, from beginning to end, dropping his Mexican countryman twice and pummeling him with big shots before referee Vic Drakulich stepped in to save Luna at 2:13 of the third. The bout, featured on the undercard of Erik Morales-Paulie Ayala, was Arce's first defense of the WBC light flyweight title.

Arce was caught a few times in the opening round by Luna and had a small cut over his left eye opened by a straight left hand from the challenger, but he still won the round with his jab.

In the second, Arce, 23, opened up and began throwing powershots, and it was clear that Luna, who was unofficially outweighed by nine pounds (121 to 112) on fight night, wasn't going to last long. Arce hit him with a hook in the first 30 seconds that wobbled him and nearly put him down. After a right to the body made the 33-year-old Luna wince, Arce flung a hook over the right and put Luna down with 30 seconds to go in the round. After rising, Luna tried to fight back, but he didn't have the power to keep Arce off. According to CompuBox, Arce landed 31 of 52 powershots in the round.

Midway through the third, a right hand flush on the jaw dropped Luna hard, and he struggled to rise at the count of eight. Arce moved right in and was battering Luna, 18-13 (12), until Drakulich (USA) jumped in to stop the bludgeoning. Arce landed 25 of 41 powershots in the final round.

"I did a lot of good things," Arce, 31-3-1 (23), said. "I may have gotten hit a little more than I should have, but he came to win and fought hard. I did what I had to do and I'm pleased with it."

Television: HBO Pay-Per-View

Promoter: Top Rank

(11-16-02)

Kevin Iole ■

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New Face

(Continued from page 20)

inal, he is unbeaten and has stopped 11 f his foes. His fluid style, authoritative h, and clever combination punching is miniscent of Buchanan, the former world ightweight champion. Buchanan was ducted into the Hall of Fame in 2001 and promised to take Arthur to Canastota s his guest as a reward for becoming ritish champion in October when he pped England's Steve Conway in four nds.

"Alex will be world champion one day. e's a nice lad, a good trainer, eats and eeps it, and has the ability to achieve his mbitions," said Buchanan, who was ring- de at Glasgow's Braehead Arena when rthur won the Lonsdale Belt.

Arthur had trained to meet fellow Scot illie Limond. But an ear infection forced mond's withdrawal, and Conway, from Brendan Ingle school in Sheffield once minated by the princely presence of aseem Hamed, stepped in on a week's tice. Conway is a well-practiced expo- nt of the slippery style tutored by Ingle, d the 25-year-old southpaw appeared pable of keeping Arthur at bay, frustrat- g him, and taking him into the late nds. Arthur had different ideas, loaded gloves with stronger stuff in the fourth, d took out the normally durable Conway h a left hook to the jaw.

t was just like Arthur had rehearsed in aring less than two weeks before the ht. Even while he works, however, he s to talk, and he could easily talk for rland. Anyone who goes by the sobri- t "Amazin'" had better have the skills, ade, and personality to carry it off, and thur does. His supreme self-confidence s not obscure the warmth or depth of character. While skipping rope, he ke glowingly of his brother who might e made it as a professional soccer play- -"He was a brilliant wee player"—had ot contracted a disease that attacked weakened his bones.

rthur smiled as he recounted the latest s of baby Alex, as much a handful for fighting father as he is for Arthur's riend, Debbie. Then he announced his ition.

"My aspirations are ridiculous, you wouldn't believe it, but I'm going to tell you anyway," he began. "I want to win world titles in three weight divisions. I dream of that. Just the sound of it really excites me. I'm 5'9", so I'll be able to move up the weights, super feather to lightweight to light welter. I'd love to achieve that goal."

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Scottish sensation Arthur has Steve Conway covering up during their October bout in Glasgow. Arthur ran his pro record to 13-0 (11) with a fourth-round knockout of tricky southpaw Conway.

Strong Christian beliefs underpin all of his convictions. He observes a quiet ritual before each of his fights, finding a quiet corner of his dressing room to kneel down and pray.

"I never ask to win a fight, only to let me go in and come back out safe, let my hands be healthy, let my head be healthy, don't let me tire, don't let me hurt my opponent, don't let my opponent hurt me, and let me fight to the best of my ability."

Only two men have been able to take him the distance, Dafydd Carlin and Rakhim Mingaleev, in his fourth and fifth bouts, and the distance was only four rounds. Nikolai Emereev of Russia retired on his stool after five rounds. More usually they are dispatched in the clinical manner with which he dealt with Pavel Potopko, overwhelmed in a single round in the medieval surrounds of Cardiff Castle in the summer.

"The only problem he has is being too eager. We have to hold him back a bit. He's still learning," said his trainer, Peter Harrison, whose son, Scott, embedded himself in the world's top-10 featherweights with a comprehensive defeat on points of Argentinean Julio Pablo Chacon on the night Arthur won the British belt. "Alex has great dedication to the sport, and if he continues in that vein he will realize his goals."

And through it all, his father will be there. He never wanted his son to box. He made him share in his passion, watching Barry McGuigan win the world featherweight title from Eusebio Pedroza, but his son's participation was not what he envisaged. It was his mother, Corinne, who allowed young Alex to work out in his room and join the Leith Victoria Boxing Club in Edinburgh. She had been a successful swimmer and she saw the enthusiasm and talent in him.

"This is all I've really known," Arthur related. "I've never had a job in my life. I've never worked. I've never done anything other than box. Getting out of bed in the morning for most people is just like me and boxing. It's what I do, it comes naturally, and it's the only thing I've ever been driven toward."

Driven and dexterous too. His father need never have worried about how Alex Arthur will turn out. ■

Brian Doogan is THE RING's European correspondent.

Alphabet Ratings

The Rankings of Boxing's Three International Governing Bodies

WBA RATINGS
(Ratings as of October 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: John Ruiz (USA)
1. Evander Holyfield (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
4. David Tua (NZ)
5. Hasim Rahman (USA)
6. Mike Tyson (USA)
7. Jameel McCline (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Fres Oquendo (PR)
10. Larry Donald (USA)
11. Nicolay Valouev (RUS)
12. Faruq Saleem (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Jean Marc Mormeck (FRA)
1. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
2. James Toney (USA)
3. Virgil Hill (USA)
4. O'Neil Bell (USA)
5. Luis Pineda (PAN)
6. Valery Brudov (RUS)
7. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
8. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
9. Ravea Springs (USA)
10. Louis Azille (GUY)
11. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
12. Alexander Petkovick (GER)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
Champ: Bruno Girard (FRA)
1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Lou Del Valle (USA)
4. David Telesco (USA)
5. Mads Larsen (DEN)
6. Reggie Johnson (USA)
7. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
8. Manuel Siaca (PR)
9. Montell Griffin (USA)
10. Rocky Torres (USA)
11. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
12. Rodney Moore (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Byron Mitchell (USA)
1. Mehdi Sahnoune (FRA)
2. Antwun Echols (USA)
3. David Starie (GB)
4. Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)
5. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
6. Danilo Haussler (GER)
7. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
8. Thomas Tate (USA)
9. Markus Beyer (GER)
10. Rick Thornberry (AUSTRL)
11. Zafarou Ballogou (TOG)
12. Nordin Ben Salah (NETH)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
Champ: William Joppy (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Bert Schenk (GER)
3. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
4. Robert Allen (USA)
5. Maselino Masoe (AUSTRL)
6. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
7. Howard Eastman (GB)
8. Erland Betare (FRA)
9. Evans Ashira (DEN)
10. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
11. Lee Blundell (USA)
12. Kingsley Ikeke (NIG)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Oscar De La Hoya (USA)
Champ: Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
1. Vacant
2. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
3. Angel Hernandez (USA)
4. Fernando Vargas (USA)
5. Travis Simms (USA)
6. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
7. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
8. Michael Rask (DEN)
9. Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)
10. Kofi Jantuah (GHA)
11. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
12. Andrei Pestriaev (RUS)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (CR)
1. Vacant
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Michael Trabant (GER)
4. Jose Rivera (USA)
5. Andrew Lewis (GUY)
6. Vince Phillips (USA)
7. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
8. Cory Spinks (USA)
9. Frederic Klose (FRA)
10. Felix Flores (PR)
11. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
12. Carlos Quintana (PR)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
Champ: Vivian Harris (GUY)
1. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)
2. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
3. Ricky Hatton (GB)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Randall Bailey (USA)
6. Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)
7. Khalid Rahilou (FRA)
8. Micky Ward (USA)
9. Zab Judah (USA)
10. Ener Julio (COL)
11. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
12. Antonio Mesquita (BRA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Leonard Dorin (CAN)
1. Miguel Callist (PAN)
2. Lakva Sim (MON)
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Raul Balbi (ARG)
5. Steve Johnston (USA)
6. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
7. Prawet Singwangcha (THAI)
8. Angel Manfredy (USA)
9. Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)
10. Colin Dunne (GB)
11. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
12. Victoriano Sosa (DR)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Unified Champ: Acelino Freitas (BRA)
Champ: Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)
1. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
2. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
3. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
4. Phillip Ndou (SA)
5. Daniel Attah (NIG)
6. Jose Miguel Cotto (PR)
7. Silvano Usini (ITA)
8. Carlos Hernandez (SAL)
9. Jesus Chavez (MEX)
10. Nate Campbell (USA)
11. Yong Soo Choi (KOR)
12. Randy Suico (PHIL)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Derrick Gainer (USA)
1. Daniel Seda (PR)
2. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. Naseem Hamed (GB)
5. Injin Chi (KOR)
6. Antonio Cermeno (VEN)
7. Lewis Woods (US)
8. Chris John (IND)
9. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
10. Spend Abazi (DEN)
11. Victor Polo (COL)
12. Oscar Leon (COL)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
1. Vacant
2. Paulie Ayala (USA)
3. Yoddamrong Sithyodthong (THAI)
4. Yober Ortega (VEN)
5. Osamu Sato (JAP)
6. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
7. Johnny Armour (GB)
8. Somsak Sithchachawan (THAI)
9. Michael Brodie (GB)
10. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
11. Napapol Kiattisachokchai (THAI)
12. Israel Vasquez (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Johnny Bredahl (DEN)
1. Leo Gamez (VEN)
2. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
3. Eidy Moya (VEN)
4. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
5. Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)
6. Jose Rojas (VEN)
7. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
8. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
9. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
10. Moises Castro (NIC)
11. Poongsawat Krachingdaen (THAI)
12. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Alexander Munoz (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Sornpichai Pisnurachank (THAI)
3. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
4. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
5. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
6. Mbwana Matumla (TNZ)
7. Luis Bolanos (COL)
8. Luis Perez (NIC)
9. Jesus Rojas (VEN)
10. Masayuki Arinaga (JAP)
11. Meiji C.P. Gym (THAI)
12. Sot Sor Veerapol (THAI)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Morel (USA)
1. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
2. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
3. Damaen Kelly (GB)
4. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
5. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
6. Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)
7. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
8. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
9. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
10. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
11. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
12. Brahim Asloum (FRA)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)
1. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
2. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
3. Pichit C. Siriwat (THAI)
4. Alex Sanchez (PR)
5. Edgar Velasquez (VEN)
6. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
7. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
8. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
9. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
10. Tatsuo Kayashida (JAP)
11. Mhikiza Myekeni (SA)
12. Kazuo Okada (JAP)

MINIMUMWEIGHTS
Champ: Noel Arambulet (VEN)
1. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
2. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
3. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
4. Khulile Makeba (SA)
5. Katzunari Takayama (JAP)
6. Manasak Yootthakit (THAI)
7. Daniel Reyes (COL)
8. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
9. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
10. Pornsawan Pramuk (THAI)
11. Wandee Charoen (THAI)
12. Juan Landaeta (VEN)

WBC RATINGS
(Ratings as of November 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Lennox Lewis (GB)
1. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
2. Evander Holyfield (USA)
3. Hasim Rahman (USA)
4. Mike Tyson (USA)
5. David Tua (NZ)
6. Jameel McCline (USA)
7. Fres Oquendo (USA)
8. Chris Byrd (USA)
9. Juan Carlos Gomez (CUB)
10. Danny Williams (GB)
11. Clifford Etienne (USA)
12. Tommy Martin (USA)
13. Joe Mesi (USA)
14. Lou Savarese (USA)
15. Jeremy Williams (USA)
16. Lamon Brewster (USA)
17. Larry Donald (USA)
18. Lance Whitaker (USA)
19. Frans Botha (SA)
20. Tim Witherspoon (USA)
21. Maurice Harris (USA)
22. Brian Nielsen (DEN)
23. Vaughn Bean (USA)
24. Sinan Samil San (TUR)
25. Andre Purlette (GUY)
26. Timo Hoffman (GB)
27. Nikolay Valouev (RUS)
28. Michael Moorer (USA)
29. Dimitry Bakhtov (KAZ)
30. DaVarryl Williamson (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
1. O'Neil Bell (USA)
2. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
3. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
4. Louis Azille (DR)
5. James Toney (USA)
6. Sebastiaan Rothmann (SA)
7. Carlos Cruzat (CHI)
8. Virgil Hill (USA)
9. Ravea Springs (USA)
10. Pietro Aurino (ITA)
11. Luis Andres Pineda (PAN)
12. Turan Bagci (TUR)
13. Alain Simon (FRA)
14. Krzysztov Wlodarczyk (POL)
15. Richard LaMontagne (USA)
16. Rudiger May (GER)
17. Alexander Petkovic (GER)
18. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
19. Guillermo Jones (PAN)
20. Saul Montana (MEX)
21. Kelvin Davis (USA)
22. Roman Kovalchuk (UKR)
23. Mohamed Ben Guesmia (ALG)
24. Jason Robinson (USA)
25. Rydell Booker (USA)
26. Frederic Serrat (FRA)
27. Grigory Drozd (RUS)
28. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
29. Michael Simms (USA)
30. Kenny Keene (USA)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Montell Griffin (USA)
3. Clinton Woods (GB)
4. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
5. Jorge Castro (ARG)
6. Eric Harding (USA)
7. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
8. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
9. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
10. Derrick Harmon (USA)
11. Reggie Johnson (USA)
12. David Telesco (USA)
13. Kamel Amrane (FRA)
14. Tomasz Adamek (POL)
15. Stipe Drews (CRO)
16. Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)
17. Arturo Rivera (MEX)
18. Rocky Torres (USA)
19. George Jones (USA)
20. Elvir Muriqi (ALB)
21. Sasha Mitrevski (MACE)
22. Elvis Michailenko (LAT)
23. Tony Oakey (GB)
24. Silvio Branco (ITA)
25. Laudelino Barros (BRA)
26. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
27. Demetrius Jenkins (USA)
28. Orlando Rivera (PR)
29. Rodney Moore (USA)
30. Daniel Judah (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Eric Lucas (CAN)
1. Markus Beyer (GER)
2. Antwun Echols (USA)
3. David Starie (GB)
4. Danilo Haussler (GER)
5. Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)
6. Mads Larsen (DEN)
7. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
8. Glenn Catley (GB)
9. Omar Sheika (USA)
10. Mehdi Sanoune (FRA)
11. Yoshinori Nishizawa (JAP)
12. Dan Batchelder (USA)
13. Henry Porras (CR)
14. Dingaan Thobela (SA)
15. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
16. Charles Brewer (USA)
17. Robin Reid (GB)
18. Brian Magee (GB)
19. Mario Veit (GER)
20. Anthony Hanshaw (USA)
21. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
22. Kabary Salem (EGY)
23. Nordin Ben Salah (HOL)
24. James Lubwana (UGA)
25. Jeff Lacy (USA)
26. Jean Paul Mendy (FRA)
27. Vinny Paz (USA)
28. Danny Green (AUSTRL)
29. Enrique Ornelas (USA)
30. Victor Oganov (RUS)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
2. Erland Betare (FRA)
3. Robert Allen (USA)
4. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
5. Raymond Joval (HOL)
6. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
7. Raul Marquez (USA)
8. Alejandro Berrio (COL)
9. Kuvanych Toygonbayev (UZB)
10. Howard Eastman (GB)
11. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
12. Oure Evans (KEN)
13. Aslan Kodzoev (RUS)
14. Carl Daniels (USA)
15. Andras Galfi (HUN)
16. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
17. Jerry Elliott (NIG)
18. Julio Garcia (CUB)
19. Jorge Sendra (SPA)
20. Tony Ayala (USA)
21. Quentin Smith (USA)
22. Tokunbo Olajide (CAN)
23. Sergey Tatevosyan (RUS)
24. Jermain Taylor (USA)
25. Mariano Carrera (ARG)
26. Satoru Suzuki (JAP)
27. Kingsley Ikeke (CAN)
28. Maselino Masoe (NZ)
29. Eric Regan (USA)
30. Jesse Brinkley (USA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar De La Hoya
1. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)
2. Fernando Vargas (USA)
3. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
4. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
5. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
6. Wayne Alexander (GB)
7. Angel Hernandez (MEX)
8. Kassim Ouma (USA)
9. Kofi Jantuah (GHA)
10. Michael Rask (DEN)
11. Richard Williams (GB)
12. Christophe Canclaux (FR)
13. Alex Bunema (USA)
14. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
15. Mihaly Kotai (HUN)
16. J.C. Candelo (COL)
17. Epifanio Mendoza (COL)
18. Andrei Pestriaev (RUS)
19. Steve Roberts (GB)
20. Sergei Dzindziruk (UKR)
21. Travis Simms (USA)
22. Alejandro Garcia (MEX)
23. Rodney Jones (USA)
24. Carlos Bojorquez (USA)
25. Francisco Mora (ARG)
26. Joachim Alcine (CAN)
27. Emmett Linton (USA)
28. Toshiharu Kaneyama (JAP)
29. Michael Jones (GB)
30. Robert Frazier (USA)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vernon Forrest (US
1. Shane Mosley (USA)
2. Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)
3. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
4. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
5. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
6. Manuel Gomez (MEX)
7. Cory Spinks (USA)
8. Alexander Vetout (UKR)
9. Rafael Pineda (COL)
10. Hiroshi Watanabe (JAP)
11. Michel Trabant (GER)
12. Andrew Lewis (GUY)
13. Jawaid Khaliq (GB)
14. Michele Orlando (ITA)
15. Miguel Rodriguez (MEX)
16. Rev Santillan (PHIL)
17. Sergio Martinez (ARG)
18. Christian Bladt (DEN)
19. James Hare (GB)
20. Teddy Reid (USA)
21. Felix Flores (PR)
22. Jeffrey Hill (USA)
23. Sam Garr (USA)
24. Juan Carlos Rubio (MEX)
25. Paolo Roberto (SWE)
26. Neil Sinclair (GB)
27. Carlos Quintana (PR)
28. Kermit Cintron (USA)
29. Raul Bejarano (ARG)
30. Paolo Sanchez (ARG)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
2. Ricky Hatton (GB)
3. James Leija (USA)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Micky Ward (USA)
6. Arturo Gatti (CAN)
7. Zab Judah (USA)
8. Omar Weis (ARG)
9. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
10. Hector Camacho Jr. (PR)
11. Miguel Cotto (PR)
12. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
13. Eamonn Magee (GB)
14. Cesar Bazan (MEX)
15. Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)
16. Ricardo Williams (USA)

17. Ener Julio (COL)
18. Francisco Bojado (MEX)
19. Souleymane M'Baye (FRA)
20. Ben Tackie (GHA)
21. Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)
22. Cosme Rivera (MEX)
23. Randall Bailey (USA)
24. Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)
25. Vince Phillips (USA)
26. Junior Witter (GB)
27. Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)
28. Michael Stewart (USA)
29. Pablo Sarmiento (ARG)
30. Fabrice Colombel (FRA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Floyd Mayweather (USA)
1. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
2. Steve Johnston (USA)
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
5. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
6. Colin Dunne (GB)
7. Bobby Vanzie (GB)
8. Carlos Gerena (PR)
9. Kengo Nagashima (JAP)
10. Dennis Laurente (PHIL)
11. Aldo Rios (ARG)
12. Jason Cook (GB)
13. Diego Gimenez (ARG)
14. Alex Trujillo (PR)
15. Miguel Callist (PAN)
16. Julio Diaz (USA)
17. Leavander Johnson (USA)
18. Juan Diaz (MEX)
19. Efren Hinojosa (MEX)
20. Cristian Bejarano (MEX)
21. Julian Wheeler (USA)
22. Steve Forbes (USA)
23. Steve Quinonez (USA)
24. Michael Clark (USA)
25. Laszlo Herczeg (HUN)
26. Juan Valenzuela (MEX)
27. Esteban Morales (COL)
28. Sayan Sanchat (RUS)
29. David Burke (GB)
30. Ricardo Silva (ARG)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Srimongkol Singmarassuk (THAI)
1. Jesus Chavez (USA)
2. Philip Ndou (SA)
3. Randy Suico (PHIL)
4. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
5. Affif Djelti (FRA)
6. Nate Campbell (USA)
7. Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)
8. Daniel Attah (NIG)
9. Jorge Paez (MEX)
10. Julio Pablo Chacon (ARG)
11. Kevin Kelley (USA)
12. Orlando Salido (MEX)
13. Fernando Trejo (MEX)
14. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
15. Mzonke Fana (SA)
16. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
17. Nobuto Honmo (JAP)
18. Ryuhei Sugita (JAP)
19. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
20. Boris Sinitsin (RUS)
21. Daniel Alicea (PR)
22. Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)
23. Pedro Miranda (SPA)
24. Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)
25. Alex Arthur (GB)
26. Yongsoo Choi (KOR)
27. Silvano Usini (ITA)
28. Lamar Murphy (USA)
29. Miguel Angel Huerta (MEX)
30. Eric Odumasi (GHA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Erik Morales (MEX)
2. Injin Chi (KOR)
3. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
4. Paulie Ayala (USA)
5. Naseem Hamed (GB)
6. Michael Brodie (GB)
7. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
8. Manuel Calvo (SPA)
9. William Abelyan (USA)
10. Luis Fuentes (MEX)
11. Spend Abazi (DEN)
12. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
13. Manuel Medina (MEX)
14. Guty Espadas (MEX)
15. Junior Jones (USA)
16. Takalani Noluvo (SA)
17. Panther Yanagida (JAP)
18. Zahir Raheem (USA)
19. Juan Gerardo Cabrera (ARG)
20. Rocky Juarez (USA)
21. Juan Carlos Ramirez (MEX)
22. Fernando Velardez (MEX)
23. Oscar Leon (COL)
24. David Murillo (MEX)
25. Yangsoo Sung (KOR)
26. Hector Velazquez (MEX)
27. George Priest Smalls (USA)
28. Frankie Toledo (USA)
29. Mike Anchondo (USA)
30. Ruben Estanislao (MEX)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Oscar Larios (MEX)
1. Kiattisak Chocchoi (THAI)
2. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
3. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
4. Kazo Ishii (JAP)
5. Willie Jorrin (USA)
6. Junichi Watanabe (JAP)
7. Shigeru Nakazato (JAP)
8. Wayne McCullough (IRE)
9. Osamu Sato (JAP)
10. Emmanuel Lucero (USA)
11. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
12. Akihiro Kanai (JAP)
13. Celestino Caballero (PAN)
14. David Donis (USA)
15. Jose Rojas (VEN)
16. Manabu Fukushima (JAP)
17. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
18. Arnel Barotillo (AUSTRL)
19. Mahyar Monshipour (FRA)
20. Youngjin Cho (KOR)
21. Bones Adams (USA)
22. Vincenzo Gigliotti (ITA)
23. Jaekwang Chung (KOR)
24. Yober Ortega (VEN)
25. Hector Julio Avila (DR)
26. Wethya Singwangcha (THAI)
27. Martin Honorio (MEX)
28. Frankie Archuleta (USA)
29. Michael Alldis (GB)
30. Jorge Solis (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)
1. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
2. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
3. Jess Maca (PHIL)
4. Diego Morales (MEX)
5. Noel Wilders (GB)
6. Genaro Garcia (USA)
7. David Guerault (FRA)
8. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
9. Julio Zarate (MEX)
10. Mark Johnson (USA)
11. Julio Gamboa (NIC)
12. Gerardo Martinez (MEX)
13. Fabien Guillerme (FRA)
14. Jhonny Gonzalez (MEX)
15. Jesus Perez (COL)
16. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
17. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
18. Jimrex Jaca (PHIL)
19. Francisco Mateos (MEX)
20. Moises Castro (NIC)
21. Steve Molitor (CAN)
22. Kyonchul Park (KOR)
23. Eidy Moya (VEN)
24. Johnny Armour (GB)
25. Daniel Ponce (MEX)
26. Hozumi Hasegawa (JAP)
27. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
28. Eduardo Escobedo (MEX)
29. Nicky Booth (GB)
30. Marat Mazimbaev (RUS)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Masamori Tokuyama (JAP)
1. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
2. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
3. Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)
4. Luis Bolano (COL)
5. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
6. Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)
7. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
8. Jose Beranza (MEX)
9. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
10. Sot Sot Veeraphol (THAI)
11. Shingo Sasaki (JAP)
12. Luis Perez (NIC)
13. Oscar Andrade (MEX)
14. Ricardo Cordoba (PAN)
15. Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)
16. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
17. Masayuki Arinaga (JAP)
18. Alexander Knight (RUS)
19. Erick Lopez (MEX)
20. Valerio Sanchez (MEX)
21. Julio Coronel (COL)
22. Sergio Santillan (ARG)
23. Shin Ogata (JAP)
24. Tat Torres (MEX)
25. Jose Navarro (USA)
26. Lunga Ntontela (SA)
27. Jovy Oracion (PHIL)
28. Rogelio Galicia (PHIL)
29. Erik Barcelona (PHIL)
30. Eduardo Pacheco (COL)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)
1. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
2. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
3. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
4. Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)
5. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
6. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
7. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
8. Gerson Guerrero (MEX)
9. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
10. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
11. Brian Viloria (USA)
12. Damaen Kelly (GB)
13. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
14. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
15. Luis Maldonado (MEX)
16. Ivan Hernandez (MEX)
17. Koji Koyama (JAP)
18. Rolly Lunas (PHIL)
19. Mimoun Chent (FRA)
20. Daisuke Naito (JAP)
21. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
22. Hayato Asai (JAP)
23. Gabriel Elizondo (USA)
24. Brahim Asloum (FRA)
25. Ramses Patterson (USA)
26. Peter Culshaw (GB)
27. Yosuke Morishima (JAP)
28. Ever Briseno (NIC)
29. Angel Priolo (COL)
30. Paulino Villalobos (MEX)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Jorge Arce (MEX)
1. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
2. Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)
3. Agustin Luna (MEX)
4. Yosam Choi (KOR)
5. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
6. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
7. Tatsuo Hayashida (JAP)
8. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
9. Victor Burgos (MEX)
10. Alex Sanchez (PR)
11. Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)
12. Manuel Vargas (MEX)
13. Jesus Martinez (MEX)
14. Pilkoo Kang (KOR)
15. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
16. Edgar Cardenas (MEX)
17. Jun Kitano (JAP)
18. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
19. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
20. Juan Alfonso Keb-Baas (MEX)
21. Roberto Vazquez (PAN)
22. Andrea Sarritzu (ITA)
23. Rafael Lozano (SPA)
24. Ernesto Castro (NIC)
25. Nerys Espinoza (NIC)
26. Juan Centeno (NIC)
27. Vuyisile Bebe (SA)
28. Rodrigo Garcia (MEX)
29. Steve Msimango (SA)
30. Jinho Kim (KOR)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)
1. Khulile Makeba (SA)
2. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
3. Isaac Bustos (MEX)
4. Sarikalek O. Eakarin (THAI)
5. Eagle Okuda (JAP)
6. Heriberto Gijon (PHIL)
7. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
8. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
9. Hiroyuki Abe (JAP)
10. Juan Palacios (NIC)
11. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
12. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
13. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
14. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
15. Jairo Arango (PAN)
16. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
17. Satoshi Kogumasaka (JAP)
18. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
19. Makoto Suzuki (JAP)
20. Sizwe Sinyabi (SA)
21. Ulises Solis (MEX)
22. Manasak Yoothakit (THAI)
23. Ricardo San Martin (MEX)
24. Namchai Ratanachaigym (THAI)
25. Pornsawan Porpramook (THAI)
26. Omar Soto (MEX)
27. Decho Bankluaygym (THAI)
28. Ayanda Ramncwana (SA)
29. Lee Sandoval (NIC)
30. Lorenzo Trejo (MEX)

IBF RATINGS
(Ratings as of November 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Chris Byrd (USA)
2. Evander Holyfield (USA)
3. David Tua (NZ)
4. Hasim Rahman (USA)
5. Jameel McCline (USA)
6. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
7. Fres Oquendo (USA)
8. Clifford Etienne (USA)
9. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
10. Lou Savarese (USA)
11. Tommy Martin (USA)
12. Tim Witherspoon (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
1. James Toney (USA)
2. Vacant
3. O'Neil Bell (USA)
4. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
5. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
6. Ravea Springs (USA)
7. Jason Robinson (USA)
8. Virgil Hill (USA)
9. Arthur Williams (USA)
10. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
11. Kelvin Davis (USA)
12. Dale Brown (CAN)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Montell Griffin (USA)
4. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
5. David Telesco (USA)
6. Derrick Harmon (USA)
7. Eric Harding (USA)
8. Reggie Johnson (USA)
9. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
10. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
11. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
12. Jorge Castro (ARG)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Antwun Echols (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Mads Larsen (DEN)
4. Danilo Haussler (GER)
5. David Starie (GB)
6. Thomas Tate (USA)
7. Charles Brewer (USA)
8. Glenn Catley (GB)
9. Markus Beyer (GER)
10. Richard Grant (USA)
11. Fernando Zuniga (USA)
12. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Robert Allen (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Carl Daniels (USA)
4. Erland Betare (FRA)
5. Raymond Joval (HOL)
6. Howard Eastman (GB)
7. Bert Schenk (GER)
8. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
9. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
10. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
11. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
12. Ali Ennebati (FRA)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Winky Wright (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Angel Hernandez (USA)
4. Andrei Pestriaev (RUS)
5. Alex Bunema (USA)
6. J.C. Candelo (COL)
7. Emmett Linton (USA)
8. Bronco McKart (USA)
9. Kassim Ouma (USA)
10. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
11. Mikael Rask (DEN)
12. Travis Simms (USA)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
1. Cory Spinks (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
4. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
5. Shane Mosley (USA)
6. James Hare (ENG)
7. Rafael Pineda (COL)
8. Jose Rivera (USA)
9. Jose Celaya (USA)
10. Antonio Diaz (MEX)
11. Kermit Cintron (USA)
12. Robert Frazier (USA)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Micky Ward (USA)
4. Arturo Gatti (USA)
5. Emanuel Augustus (USA)
6. Zab Judah (USA)
7. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
8. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
9. Ben Tackie (GHA)
10. Omar Weis (ARG)
11. Carlos Vilches (ARG)
12. James Leija (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Paul Spadafora (USA)
1. Leavander Johnson (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Angel Manfredy (USA)
5. Victoriano Sosa (DR)
6. Steve Johnston (USA)
7. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
8. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
9. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
10. Julian Wheeler (USA)
11. Dorin Spivey (USA)
12. Julio Diaz (USA)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Steve Forbes (USA)
2. David Santos (USA)
3. Jesus Chavez (USA)
4. Carlos Hernandez (USA)
5. Joel Casamayor (USA)
6. Phillip Ndou (SA)
7. Nate Campbell (USA)
8. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
9. Daniel Attah (USA)
10. Orlando Salido (MEX)
11. Lamont Pearson (USA)
12. Daniel Alicea (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
2. Manuel Medina (MEX)
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. Oscar Leon (PR)
5. Frankie Toledo (USA)
6. Johnny Tapia (USA)
7. William Abelyan (USA)
8. Michael Brodie (ENG)
9. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
10. Victor Polo (COL)
11. Naseem Hamed (ENG)
12. Istvan Kovacs (HUN)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Jose Luis Valbuena (ARG)
4. Paulie Ayala (USA)
5. Fernando Velardez (USA)
6. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
7. Jorge Eliecer Julio (COL)
8. Enrique Sanchez (MEX)
9. F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)
10. David Donis (USA)
11. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
12. Bones Adams (USA)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Tim Austin (USA)
1. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
2. Vacant
3. Pete Frissina (USA)
4. Diego Morales (MEX)
5. Jesus Perez (COL)
6. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
7. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
8. David Guerault (FRA)
9. Adan Vargas (MEX)
10. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
11. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
12. Spend Abazi (DEN)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Felix Machado (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Martin Castillo (MEX)
4. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
5. Luis Bolano (COL)
6. Ricardo Vargas (USA)
7. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
8. Samson 3K-Battery (THAI)
9. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
10. Fahsung 3K-Battery (THAI)
11. Oscar Andrade (MEX)
12. Kobayashi Yosuke (JAP)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Irene Pacheco (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Damaen Kelly (GB)
4. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
5. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
6. Hussein Hussein (LEB)
7. Wandee Chareon (THAI)
8. Masaki Nakanuma (JAP)
9. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
10. Mike Trejo (USA)
11. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
12. Angel Priolo (COL)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Ricardo Lopez (MEX)
1. Jose Burgos (MEX)
2. Alexander Sanchez (PR)
3. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
4. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
5. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
6. Fahlan Sakreerin (THAI)
7. Juan Keb Baas (MEX)
8. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
9. Will Grigsby (USA)
10. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
11. Peter Culshaw (ENG)
12. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)

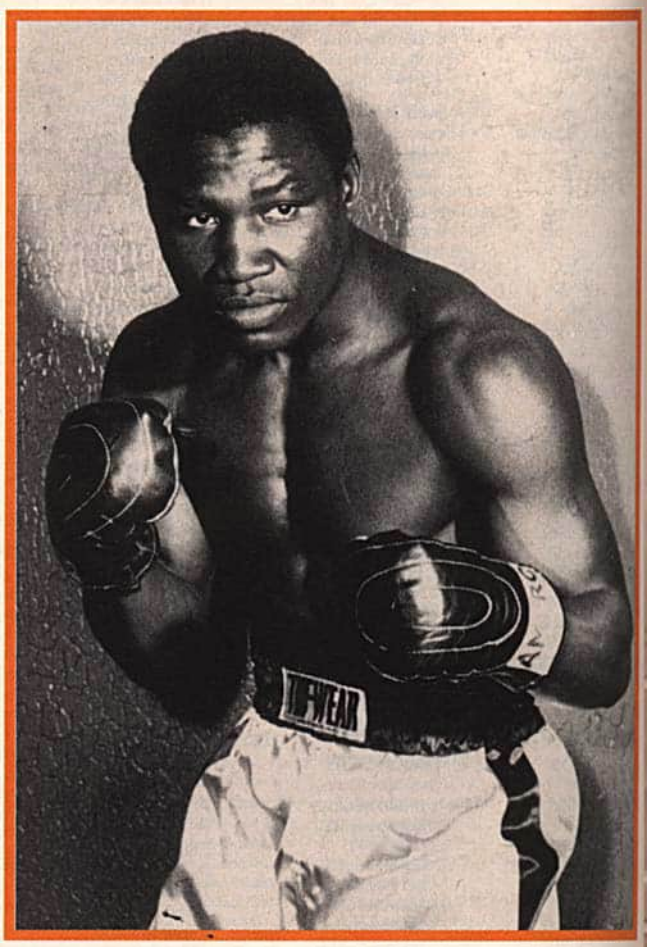
MINI FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Miguel Barrera (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Daniel Reyes (COL)
4. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
5. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
6. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
7. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
8. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
9. Muhammad Rachman (INDO)
10. Sarikalrk Ekarin (THAI)
11. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
12. Isaac Bustos (MEX)

CLASSIC

From THE RING, January-February 1963

THE FIGHT OF MY LIFE

By Dick Tiger



I had heard about the "penalties of success," but I did not pay much attention to them until after I defeated Gene Fullmer for the World Boxing Association middleweight title. Now I am beginning to understand what one of those "penalties" are—a tough schedule for my right hand. It has been taking more punishment outside the ring than it ever did inside. It's getting numb from all the handshaking and autograph signing it has to do.

Now it is inviting even tougher punishment—trying to write about myself, my impressions of the Fullmer fight, and my future plans.

I haven't learned how to use a typewriter yet, and by the time I get finished pushing a pen, I can only hope the right hand has enough strength left for me to be able to use a knife and fork at meal time.

Anyway, here goes with my first attempt as an "author":

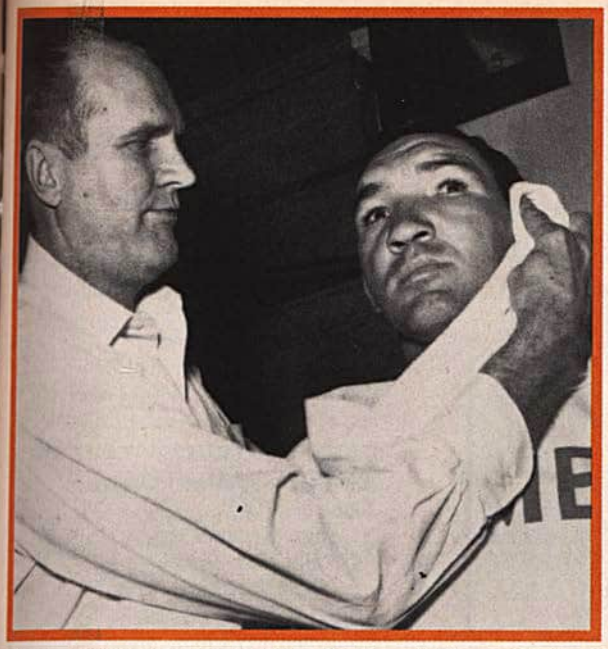
To begin with, I would like to thank everybody who helped me get the chance to fight Fullmer for the WBA middleweight belt. I want especially to thank THE RING staff and the WBA Commissioner Abe J. Greene. They were my strongest supporters during my long months of trying to force either Fullmer or the other championship claimant, Paul Pender, into the ring with me.

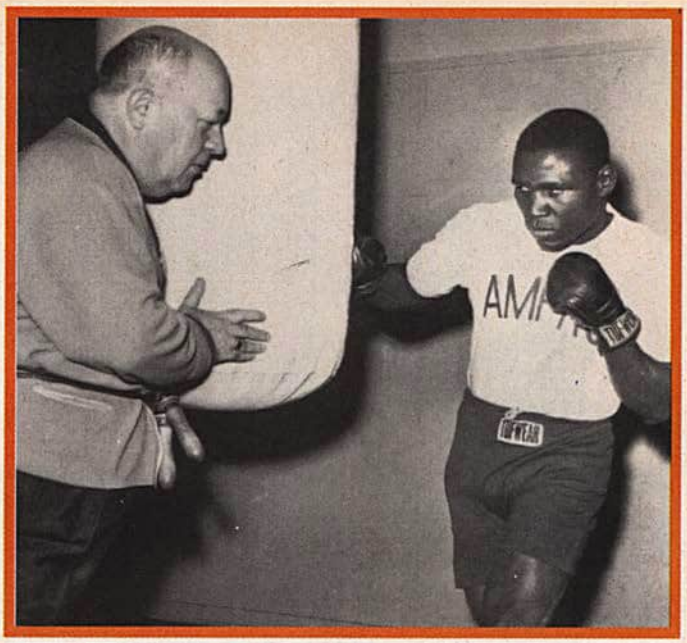
At times it looked as though my hopes were being wasted, and I would never get a chance at either part of the world title. I was sure I could beat Fullmer and Pender, if I could get the chance, but both seemed determined to avoid me.

I was in Nigeria when my American representative, Jersey Jones, cabled me that he had been dickering with Promoter Norman Rothschild and prospects were very good that I finally would be matched with Fullmer. Three possible sites were mentioned—Bozeman, Montana; Las Vegas, Nevada; and San Francisco, California.

It was wonderful news and I could hardly believe it. I didn't lose any time getting ready to leave for the United States if I got word that the bout was definite. It was. The next cable I received said the match was set for August 27 in San Francisco.

I got out of Nigeria as fast as I could. I arrived in New York on July 31, which didn't give me much time—less than four weeks—to get into my best condition, after "bumming





Fullmer, pictured with manager Marv Jensen, and Tiger both trained hard for their upcoming fight. Tiger was so meticulous that he and his trainer Jimmy August, shown holding the heavybag, took the trip to San Francisco three weeks in advance of the fight to get used to the climate.

around" all summer in my hometown, Aba. But I would have fought with only one day of training if I had to. This was my big chance, and nothing would stop me from taking advantage of it.

I had hardly arrived in New York when the promoter announced a postponement. The new date was September 12. Then came another postponement, this one to October 16. I was beginning to think my big dream was just that, a dream, and that maybe, after all, I never would get the championship match.

I had started my training in the Catholic Youth Association gymnasium in New York, but to help the publicity for the show, Mr. Jones arranged for me and my trainer, Jimmy August, to go to San Francisco three weeks in advance. It also would enable me to become adjusted to the climate there. At Mr. Rothschild's invitation, August and I left New York on September 24, stopped off in Chicago for the Sonny Liston-Floyd Patterson bout the next night, then continued on to San Francisco the following morning.

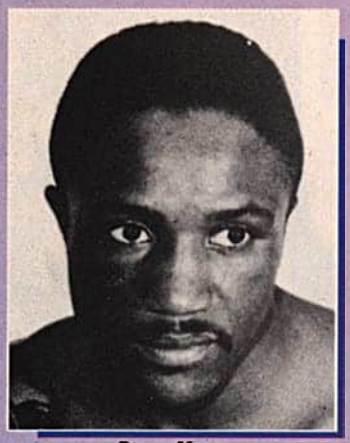
Right now, I would like to say I enjoyed my stay in San Francisco. Everybody was very pleasant and helpful to me. Unfortunately, however, two unexpected developments had me worried again about the fight. First, the local baseball team, the Giants, got into the World Series with the New York Yankees. It was the first time San Francisco had a team in the World Series, and the city became hysterical. It had no time for anything else, and our fight was almost forgotten in the excitement. Then, adding to the worries, a rainy spell came along and the baseball games ran into several delays. The series didn't end until the day our fight was scheduled. So once more the bout had to be moved back, this time for a week, to October 23.

Although it had stopped raining, the weather wasn't too favorable that week. We were getting plenty of fog and chilly days, and prospects for an outdoor fight, in the Giants' stadium, Candlestick Park, weren't too good.

Anyway, there were no more delays. The fight went on this time, but the

Fullmer had a difficult style, said Tiger. The Utah tough guy had a tendency to chop instead of punch with his fists. Fullmer was also very strong and knew how to push and maul an opponent.

THE RING RATINGS, January-February 1963



Davey Moore

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Sonny Liston, Philadelphia, PA
1. **Floyd Patterson,** Scarsdale, NY
2. **Eddie Machen,** Portland, OR
3. **Zora Folley,** Chandler, AZ
4. **Cassius Clay,** Louisville, KY
5. **Ingemar Johansson,** Sweden
6. **Cleveland Williams,** Houston, TX
7. **Archie Moore,** San Diego, CA
8. **Henry Cooper,** England
9. **Robert Cleroux,** Canada
10. **Billy Daniels,** New York, NY

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Harold Johnson, Philadelphia, PA
1. **Giulio Rinaldi,** Italy
2. **Mauro Mina,** Peru
3. **Doug Jones,** New York, NY
4. **Eddie Cotton,** Seattle, WA
5. **Willie Pastrano,** Miami, FL
6. **Gustav Scholz,** Germany
7. **Erich Schoppner,** Germany
8. **Bobo Olson,** Honolulu, HI
9. **Chic Calderwood,** Scotland
10. **Peter Gumpert,** Germany

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Paul Pender, Brookline, MA
Dick Tiger, Nigeria
(Recognized by WBA and its Associates)
1. **Gene Fullmer,** West Jordan, UT
2. **Terry Downes,** England
3. **Denny Moyer,** Portland, OR
4. **George Benton,** Philadelphia, PA
5. **Joey Giardello,** Cherry Hill, NJ
6. **Henry Hank,** Detroit, MI
7. **Luis Folledo,** Spain
8. **Laszlo Papp,** Hungary
9. **Joey Giambra,** Buffalo, NY
10. **Bruno Visintin,** Italy

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Emile Griffith, New York, NY
1. **Luis Rodriguez,** Miami, FL
2. **Brian Curvis,** Wales
3. **Ralph Dupas,** New Orleans, LA
4. **Jorge Fernandez,** Argentina
5. **Ted Wright,** Detroit, MI
6. **Rip Randall,** Dallas, TX
7. **Bob Fosmire,** Rockaway, NJ
8. **Federico Thompson,** Argentina
9. **Isaac Logart,** New York, NY
10. **Curtis Cokes,** Dallas, TX

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Eddie Perkins, Gary, IN
1. **Kenny Lane,** Muskegon, MI
2. **Duilio Loi,** Italy
3. **Louis Molina,** San Jose, CA
4. **Battling Torres,** Mexico
5. **Paul Armstead,** Los Angeles, CA
6. **Jose Stable,** Cuba
7. **Angel Garcia,** Cuba
8. **Manuel Alvarez,** Argentina
9. **Aissa Hashas,** France
10. **Ben Medina,** Fresno, CA

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Carlos Ortiz, New York, NY
1. **Carlos Hernandez,** Venezuela
2. **Bunny Grant,** Jamaica
3. **Doug Vaillant,** Cuba
4. **Joe Brown,** Houston, TX
5. **Arthur Persley,** Red Crosse, LA
6. **Teruo Kosaka,** Japan
7. **Alfredo Urbina,** Mexico
8. **Dave Charnley,** England
9. **Soloman Boysaw,** Cleveland, OH
10. **Nicolino Locche,** Argentina

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Gabriel "Flash" Elorde, Philippines
1. **Auburn Copeland,** Flint, MI
2. **Ray Nobile,** Italy
3. **Jose Luis Cruz,** Mexico
4. **Yukio Katsumato,** Japan
5. **Johnny Bizzarro,** Erie, PA
6. **Harold Gomes,** Providence, RI
7. **Oscar Reyes,** Philippines
8. **Love Allotey,** Ghana
9. **Tommy Tibbs,** Boston, MA
10. **Mel Middleton,** Philadelphia, PA

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Davey Moore, Springfield, OH
1. **Sugar Ramos,** Cuba
2. **Rafiu King,** Nigeria
3. **Kazuo Takayama,** Japan
4. **Jet Bally,** Philippines
5. **Howard Winstone,** Wales
6. **Danny Valdez,** Los Angeles, CA
7. **Alberto Serti,** Italy
8. **Mitsunori Seki,** Japan
9. **Leroy Jeffreys,** Saginaw, MI
10. **Don Johnson,** Los Angeles, CA

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: Eder Jofre, Brazil
1. **Ismael Laguna,** Panama
2. **Piero Rollo,** Italy
3. **Alphonse Halimi,** France
4. **Joe Medel,** Mexico
5. **Katsutoshi Aoki,** Japan
6. **Pierre Cossemyns,** Belgium
7. **Johnny Caldwell,** Ireland
8. **Freddie Gilroy,** Ireland
9. **Jorge Salazar,** Mexico
10. **Edmundo Esparza,** Mexico

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Masahiko "Fighting" Harada, Japan
1. **Pone Kingpetch,** Thailand
2. **Salvatore Burruni,** Italy
3. **Bernardo Caraballo,** Colombia
4. **Pascual Perez,** Argentina
5. **Ramon Arias,** Venezuela
6. **Horacio Accavallo,** Argentina
7. **Mimun Ben Ali,** Spain
8. **Kyo Noguchi,** Japan
9. **Hiroyuki Ebihara,** Japan
10. **Chatchai Laempafha,** Thailand

turnout was a disappointment to promoter Rothschild. When the match was arranged, he confidently expected about 25,000 fans and gate receipts of $200,000. But the show had been hurt by the three postponements, the excitement of the World Series, and the unfavorable weather. I don't know what the final figures were, but I understand the attendance was about 12,000 and the receipts $101,000. Mr. Rothschild must have lost about $35,000 with the promotion. He had big expenses with the promotion.

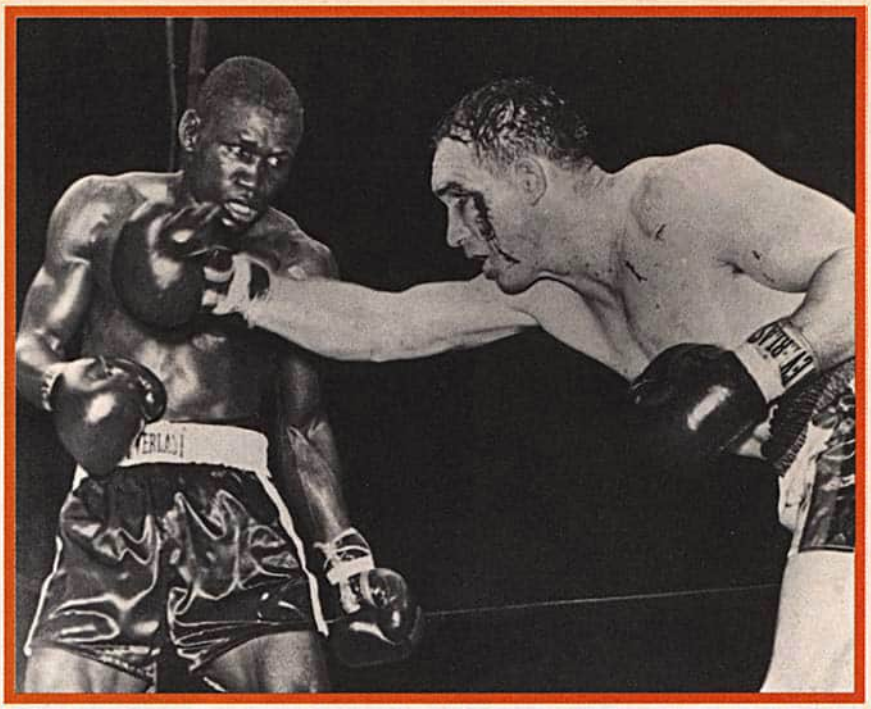
But getting on to the fight. I had plenty of moral and vocal support. For one thing, I was permitted to invite my old pal and first trainer in England, Maurice Foran of Liverpool, to come over as my guest and to work in my corner with Mr. Jones and Jimmy August. Also from Liverpool came Mr. Harry Ormesher, a prominent betting

commissioner and one of England's most enthusiastic fight fans. During my early discouraging days in England, Mr. Ormesher had given me much good advice and encouragement, and now that I was fighting for a world title, he wanted to be there.

Nigeria was so excited by my fighting for a championship; it sent a delegation of five, including the minister of labor, Mr. J.M. Johnston, and the secretary of justice, Mr. R.B.K. Okafor. The Nigerian Ambassador to the United States came on from Washington. In the party from Africa were Hogan Kid Bassey, former world featherweight champion and Nigeria's first king of the ring. Bassey is now national coach of Nigeria's amateur boxers. Also in my rooting section were 30 Nigerian students attending school in San Francisco.

I was in excellent condition for the fight. I weighed 159 pounds to Fullmer's 160, and was ready for anything Gene offered. I had never seen any of his fights in person, but I had seen several of them on television and I knew I was in for a rough time.

Fullmer has a difficult style to describe. He is awkwardly clever, and he chops instead of punches with his fists. He is tremendously strong and knows how to use that straight right to push and maul and gradually wear down his opponent.



By the fifth round, Tiger had found his groove, finding openings for his dangerous right hand. Fullmer's left eye, which began bleeding in the second, grew steadily worse as the bout progressed.

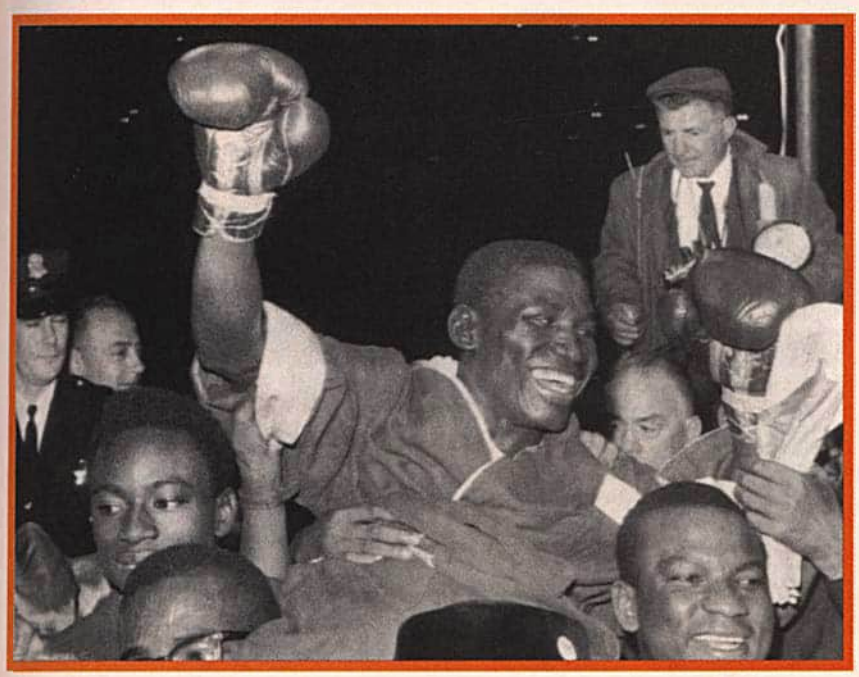
But I felt I was just as strong as he was, and if he tried to make a Pier 6 brawl out of the fight, he would find me a willing cooperator.

By the way, don't let anybody tell you there is no real power in Fullmer's punches. Maybe Gene doesn't snap his jabs or hit straight out with his right, but those chops of his can hurt when they land. I know. Several times during the bout I thought Fullmer was swinging heavy clubs at me. Those punches may not knock you out, but they can jolt and stun. It doesn't take many of them to wear an opponent out.

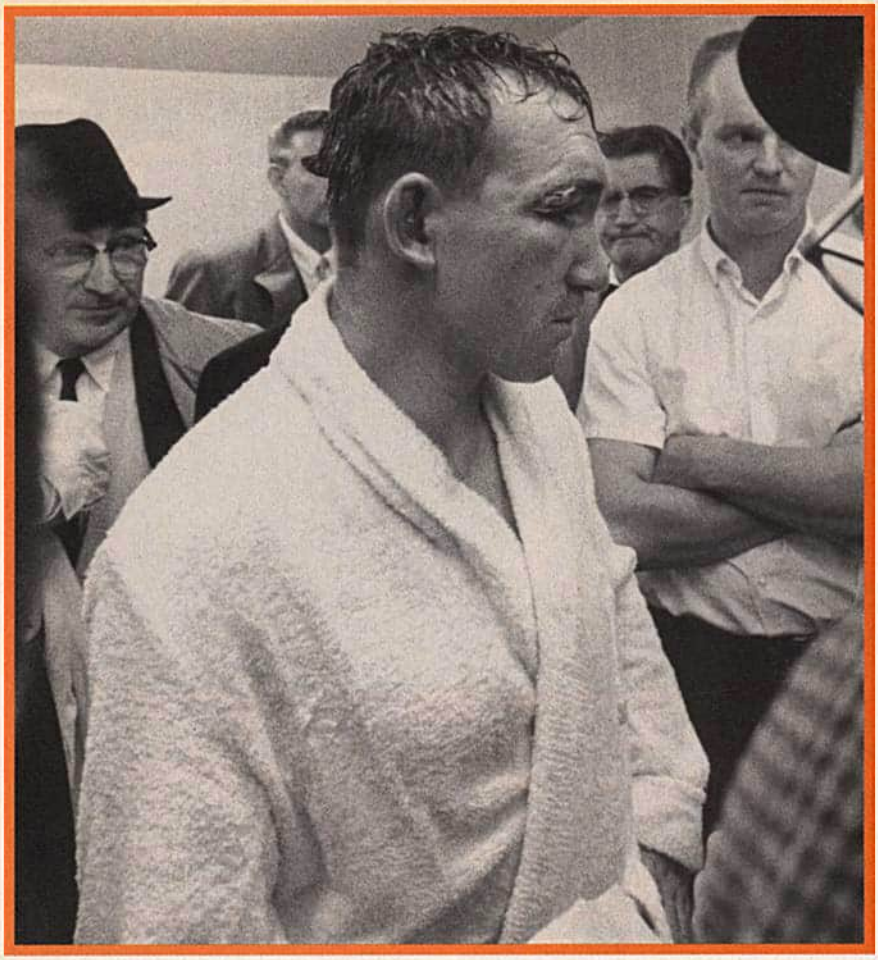
Fullmer must have planned to get a quick jump on me. He came out fighting at top speed in the first round. It was lucky I was ready for him, or he probably would have swept me right out of the ring and into San Francisco Bay.

It was one of the wildest first rounds I've ever fought, but it was no wilder than the next three. I began wondering to myself if two fighters could possibly go 15 rounds at that furious pace. I guess Fullmer was wondering, too. He slowed down a bit in the fifth and seemed to get cautious. I knew then I was on my way to the championship. I fought according to instructions—to keep crowding Gene, give him no time to relax, mix my punches to the head and body, and punch my way free when he tried to clinch.

I noticed a slight trickle of blood coming down from above Fullmer's left eye in the fifth round. I was told later that I had nicked the eye in the second, but I hadn't paid any attention to it until the fifth. It kept getting worse, and by the 10th round, Gene was bleeding badly from it, as well as from his nose and mouth. The referee, Frankie Carter, looked him over in the



The jubilant Tiger was mobbed by his Nigerian countrymen and hoisted on their shoulders after winning a unanimous decision and being announced as "the winner and new world middleweight champion."



Because Fullmer gave Tiger a chance, Tiger was willing to give the swollen and weary Fullmer a rematch. First, Tiger was willing to wait, because "if Gene wants a delay, to let his damaged face heal properly, he can have it." They ended up fighting a rematch on February 23, 1963.

corner, and then called the commission physician, Dr. Don Lastreto, into the ring to examine the damage. All this must have taken two minutes. The doctor finally gave his approval for Gene to continue.

I knew then that nothing but an accident could prevent me from winning the title. I continued to plod ahead, setting a steady pace, defending myself from Fullmer's occasional outbursts, and punching as and when I saw openings. I think Fullmer got a real break toward the end of the 13th round when the referee, thinking he had heard the bell, waved his arms as though the round had ended. Gene was in real tough shape then, reeling on the ropes, and that sudden pause must have been a blessing to him. It was only for 10 seconds, but an important 10 seconds.

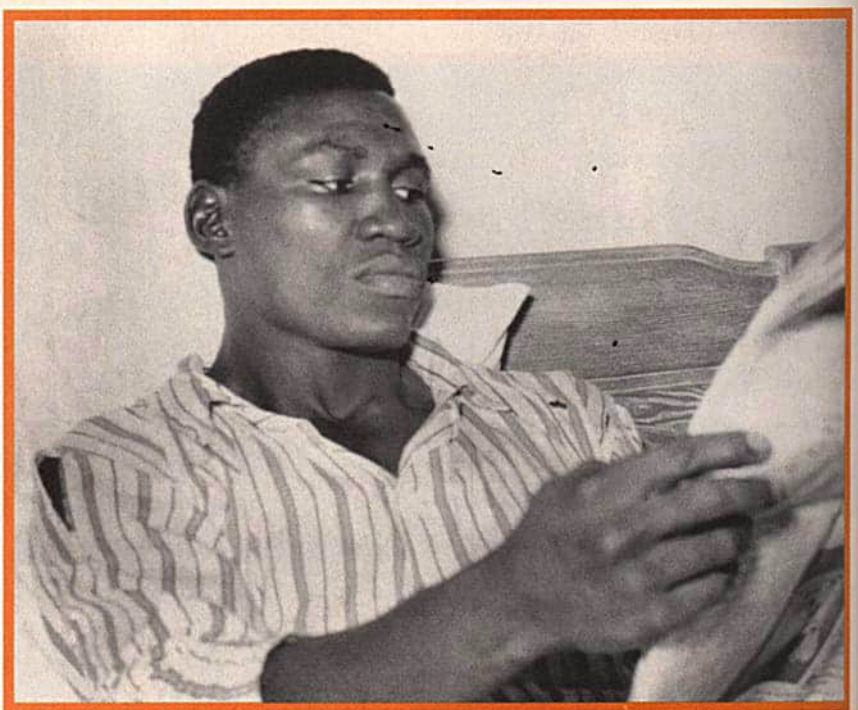
I was lucky in one respect. Although it was a grueling battle, I came out of it unmarked.

The decision was unanimous. California has its own scoring system—one point to the winner of a round (two points if the margin is decisive), and none to the loser. Even rounds get no points. Referee Carter favored me 10-1. The two judges had it closer. Jack Downey voted 9-5 and Vern Bybee 7-5.

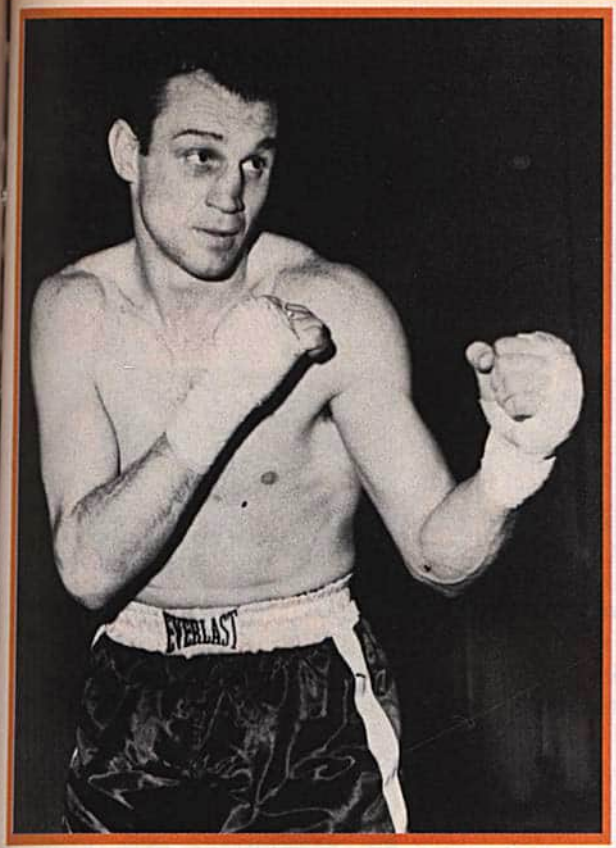
As for my future plans—first I'm going home to Nigeria and spend some time with my family, my wife Abigail and four youngsters, Richard, Grace, Victoria, and Justina. When I left for this bout, I expected to be gone only four or five weeks, but after all those postponements, I'll be away more than three months. I suppose I'll have a busy time with all the celebrations being arranged for me when I get home, but I'll try to find time for light training so I don't get too far out of condition.

Since Fullmer was sportsman enough to give me a crack at his title, I want to be just as generous and give him a return match if and when he wants it. We have an arrangement for the return to be held January 19 in either Bozeman or Las Vegas, but if Gene wants a delay, to let his damaged face heal properly, he can have it. I won't decide anything definite about future bouts until I know of Fullmer's wishes.

If I am fortunate enough to defeat Gene again, I'd like to settle the championship dispute with Paul Pender, if he still has his



Tiger wakes up in his San Francisco hotel room as the new king of the 160-pounders, and then has the pleasure of reading all about it in the local newspaper.



Tiger wanted to fight Paul Pender next, but the Massachusetts middleweight was stripped of his claim to the middleweight crown shortly after Tiger beat Fullmer, making a unification bout unnecessary.

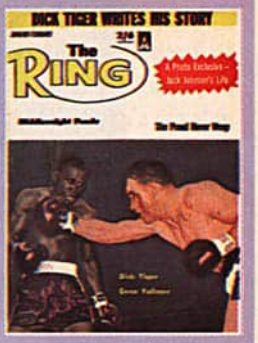
part of the title by then. My manager tells me that by adding the countries controlled by the World Boxing Association to those covered by the British Empire, I am now middleweight champion of three-fourths of the world. I'd like to add the other fourth as soon as possible.

(Editor's Comment: Tiger apparently won't have to concern himself any longer with the "other fourth" of the world championship. It has already been awarded to him—or, rather, all of it except the state of Massachusetts. Shortly after the Nigerian's return home, Chairman Melvin L. Krulewitch of the New York State Athletic Commission announced that he had conferred with the other boxing organizations which had recognized Pender—the British Boxing Board of Control and the European Boxing Union—and they had agreed to strip Pender of his share of the title because of inactivity.

Pender's last title bout was on April 7, when he decisioned Terry Downes in Boston. His six-month period of grace expired October 7. The New York board had already announced that it would not recognize his bout with Jose Torres in Boston, scheduled for November 15, as for the title, since Torres was not a rated challenger.

When that match was cancelled, and Pender had no definite plans for the immediate future, it was decided to forfeit his part of the championship, and concur with the WBA in recognizing Tiger as world champion. As this is being written, only the state of Massachusetts continues to regard Pender as champion. Pender has taken his case to court and, as we go to press, is suing to have his part of the world title restored to him.) ■

THE RING, January-February 1963



***The Cover*:** Dick Tiger gave fight fans an interesting behind-the-scenes glimpse of the struggle it took to set up a fight with middleweight champion Gene Fullmer. The Nigerian fighter won a portion of the middleweight crown with a 15-round decision over Fullmer in San Francisco, California.

***Picturing Jack*:** Former heavyweight champ Jack Johnson's life was portrayed in pictures from his early beginnings, to the height of his career as the first black heavyweight champ, to his eventual demise in losing the heavyweight title to Jess Willard.

***Headed To The Hall*:** THE RING reviewed the boxing Hall of Fame class of 1962. Among the inductees was Marcel Cerdan (pictured), considered the greatest modern fighter to come out of France. Cerdan was joined by featherweight contender Billy Petrolle, former lightweight champ Willie Ritchie, and bare-knuckle era fighter/promoter Ned Price.

***Liston's Dossier*:** Little was known about brooding heavyweight champ Sonny Liston. THE RING felt compelled to see what made Liston tick, and found the following through a court transcript: Liston revealed he had no education, and worked to help his family by picking cotton. By the time he was 18, Liston was in jail, where he found boxing.

***Fighter Of The Month*:** Cassius Clay, an emerging colorful heavyweight contender in the early-1960s, just earned his 16th win and 13th knockout by dispatching the legendary Archie Moore in the fourth round. Moore said afterward that Clay, later to be known as Muhammad Ali, had an excellent chance to defeat heavyweight champ Sonny Liston.

COME OUT WRITING

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

BARRERA'S THE BEST

I am writing in response to the article "Pound-For-Pound Up For Grabs" in the February 2003 issue. You can make an argument for several different fighters claiming the top pound-for-pound spot, but in my opinion, it should be Marco Antonio Barrera. It didn't seem that long ago when Naseem Hamed was the best featherweight in the world, but after Barrera gave him his only loss, we haven't seen much of him since. I also thought Barrera won his rematch with Erik Morales, 115-113. Finally, Barrera is the only fighter to convincingly defeat Johnny Tapia.

JUSTIN HOPEY
Madbury, NH

THE SMACK TALKER GETS SMACKED

Fernando Vargas was never silent about wanting to get Oscar De La Hoya in the ring. Well, he got his wish, but it didn't turn out the way "El Feroz" had planned. Maybe when Fernando takes a hard look in the mirror at his broken eye socket, he'll think twice about talking too much smack. For Vargas' sake, I hope he's not permanently injured. After all, boxing is a sport, not some place for personal grudges.

Oscar De La Hoya made Fernando Vargas pay the price for opening his mouth. "The Golden Boy" vanquished Vargas in the 11th round and, according to reader Rocky Seitz, will easily beat Shane Mosley if that's who he fights next.

With that said, even the De La Hoya haters have to be impressed with his performance. I doubt Oscar will get Felix Trinidad back in the ring anytime soon, because "Tito" knows he got away with one the last time out. Shane Mosley says he's game for a rematch, but I don't think he has a chance. Whatever happens next, Oscar has a lot to be proud of.

ROCKY SEITZ
Pensacola, FL

LEWIS IS FOR THE BYRDS

I have been a true boxing fan for years and I just cannot believe that some people really think that Lennox Lewis is underrated—or a true champion! To be honest, if he is that great of a champion, why didn't he give Chris Byrd a chance? I know that Byrd is not the most exciting fighter out there, but one thing that we could count on is Byrd giving any boxer out there a hell of a time! For example, in his fight with David Tua, Byrd—unlike Lennox—managed to hit and run, not just run.

Another thing that baffles me is that Lennox says Wladimir Klitschko is not even at his level, but at the same time signs to fight Wladimir's big brother Vitali. This is the same Vitali who was defeated by Byrd, and the same Vitali who is not even half as good as his brother Wladimir. So let's get it straight: Lennox Lewis is not underrated, he is just unrealistic. A word of advice: Real champions fight anyone and everyone. They don't duck fighters who earn their shot. Think about it, champ!

JORGE ROMERO
Philadelphia, PA

PHOTO BY AMY TOTO

Reader John Barough doesn't think Roy Jones (pictured en route to a sixth-round TKO of Clinton Woods) is going to go through with his move up to heavyweight. Barough is tired of Jones teasing fans with such talk, and is tired of magazines like The Ring devoting space to it.

TIRED OF READING ABOUT ROY

Now that this is starting up again, will you folks at The Ring kindly spare us another round of articles speculating about Roy Jones' chances against a heavyweight? You fellas know as well as anyone in boxing that the guy will find 15 million excuses to back out, so why waste any more of your insights, or our time, writing about this tired subject matter?

It's one thing for HBO to keep pushing this stuff—after all, they blew a fortune on this Eminem wannabe. But just because those chumps got stuck with a lemon doesn't mean that real boxing fans should have to put up with all of the self-serving b.s. the guy and his people serve up every six months or so.

Enough is enough, guys. There are way too many compelling fights and worthwhile fighters around for you to be paying any more attention to Jones. Meager pay-per-view buy rates and half-empty arenas should indicate that the boxing public has tuned the guy out. It's time the boxing press did likewise.

JOHN BAROUGH
Cedar Rapids, IA

GRADING CURVE

Your assessment of "The Men Behind The Mikes" in the February 2002 issue hit the mark accurately, with only one exception—Big George Foreman. George functions as a color man, not a reporter. Through his friendly and often humorous demeanor, George serves as a much-needed goodwill ambassador for boxing. For this, Foreman gets an A.

Max Kellerman is the real deal who inspires interest in the sport, and while Brian Kenny is competent in his reporting and brings the best out of Max, I really don't care about Kenny's opinions.

A token D- for Jim Gray? Just fail him for his gross lack of ethics. His deplorable track record is well-documented.

ROBERT ATKINSON
Feuton, MI

OSCAR OVER TITO

Even though I agree with much of your list in the "80 Best Fighters Of The Last 80 Years" issue, I strongly disagree with your ranking Felix Trinidad (number 51) ahead of Oscar De La Hoya (number 75), especially by such a wide margin. First of all, even though Oscar ran for the last three rounds, he was clearly the winner, and I firmly believe Oscar would crush Felix in a rematch. You claim the rankings were based on accomplishment. Well, Oscar has won titles in four separate weight classes, Trinidad only three. Oscar had beaten 13 champions or titleholders at the time you compiled your list, Trinidad only 10.

The facts speak for themselves. Give De La Hoya his due. The man has never been knocked out (unlike Trinidad), has been boxing's biggest non-heavyweight draw, and most importantly, doesn't quit like a coward after he loses and can't get a rematch.

NESTOR RAMIREZ
Marcy, NY

IS SHANE WORTHY?

I never realized that Shane Mosley was so powerful. After announcing that he was going to move up to the junior middleweight division, Mosley automatically became The Ring's number-five ranked junior middle. That must have been a powerful statement for you to bypass the fact that Mosley has never fought at 154 pounds. Don't get me wrong, I love Shane as much as anybody, but he should have to earn his spot just like other fighters. My question is, what if, for some strange reason, Mosley can't hold a candle at 154? What if he loses again? How then would you justify his ranking?

ALEX HUTCHINSON
Englewood, FL

LET'S SEE BARRERA VS. PAC-MAN

I'm a big boxing fan and I want to see exciting matchups. The two boxers I admire most are Manny Pacquiao and Marco Antonio Barrera. Pacquiao is currently campaigning as a junior featherweight and is ranked number one by your magazine, while Barrera is recognized as the true featherweight champion. I don't think there's anybody right now in the 122-pound division who can beat "Pac-Man," and there's nobody in the featherweight class right now who will be able to beat Barrera. So let's have a Barrera-Pacquiao match. It would be a very exciting fight, a classic clash between power and skill.

DENNIS PASTORPELI
denzpastor23@yahoo.com ■

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

If featherweight champion Marco Antonio Barrera is looking for challengers, reader Dennis Pastorpeli thinks Manny Pacquiao would be perfect. Right now, there's only four pounds separating the pair, and "Pac-Man" has already indicated he'll be moving up in weight soon.

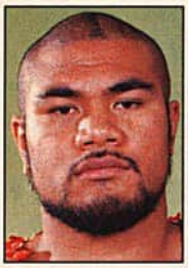
LOOKING AHEAD

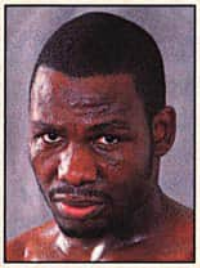
By Eric Raskin

ROCK'S REVENGE ... OR TUA TIME AGAIN?

After their controversial December 1998 bout for the right to fight for the IBF heavyweight belt, **David Tua** and **Hasim Rahman's** careers went in different directions. Rahman, who was ahead of Tua on points when he was hurt by a punch after the bell ending the ninth round and stopped prematurely in the 10th, saw his career go down (the loss to **Oleg Maskaev**), up (upsetting **Lennox Lewis** for the heavyweight title), and down again (losing the rematch to Lewis and then to **Evander Holyfield**). Tua did the opposite, going up (four easy kayo wins to secure his shot at Lewis), down (losses to Lewis and **Chris Byrd**), and up again (knockouts of **Fres Oquendo** and **Michael Moorer**).

Now, with another shot at the IBF title at stake, they'll meet again at the crossroads. The exact date had not yet been determined as of press time, but Tua-Rahman II could end up on HBO March 8, one week after the **John Ruiz-Roy Jones** pay-per-view.





Tua-Rahman: Major heavyweight clash in March

Tua's coming in with serious positive momentum, while Rahman's stumbling in off two straight defeats. But that can't stop "The Rock" from doing what he does best—talking trash.

"He knocked out Michael Moorer in 30 seconds, and everybody's on the Tua bandwagon. Well, you know what? I know his weakness," Rahman said after the rematch was signed. "I'll knock him out. Tell the midget I'm coming to knock him out."

Tua, who is very short for a heavyweight at 5'9", has never been much of a trash-talker, and he chose not to return fire. But his manager/trainer Kevin Barry was more than happy to do it on his behalf.

"Rahman has two stoppages (actually one stoppage and one technical-decision loss) in his last two fights," Barry said. "Now he's fighting the best puncher in the heavyweight division who also has the best chin. This will be the third strike, you're out. It will finish his career."

Another knockout loss for Rahman could very well do exactly that. But should Rahman live up to his promise and knock out "the midget," it could do the same to Tua. Sure, this fight guarantees the winner a shot at an alphabet belt. But there's a lot more on the line here than just that.

LOOKING BACK

Davis: Can '03 be as great as '02?

Typically, this column examines the future and not the past, but HBO Sports Senior Vice President **Kery Davis** had some interesting things to say about the year that has just ended, and his comments may have some bearing on the year that is just beginning.

"When I look back at 2002, I can't think of a better year for boxing in recent memory," Davis said. "Starting in January with **Vernon Forrest** vs. **Shane Mosley**, think of how many top guys fought the guys we most wanted them to fight. Forrest-Mosley happened twice. Same with **Floyd Mayweather-Jose Luis Castillo**. We had **Arturo Gatti-Micky Ward** twice, we had the **Marco Antonio Barrera-Erik Morales** rematch, we had **Oscar De La Hoya-Fernando Vargas**. And of course we had Lennox Lewis vs. **Mike Tyson**, which everyone said would never happen.

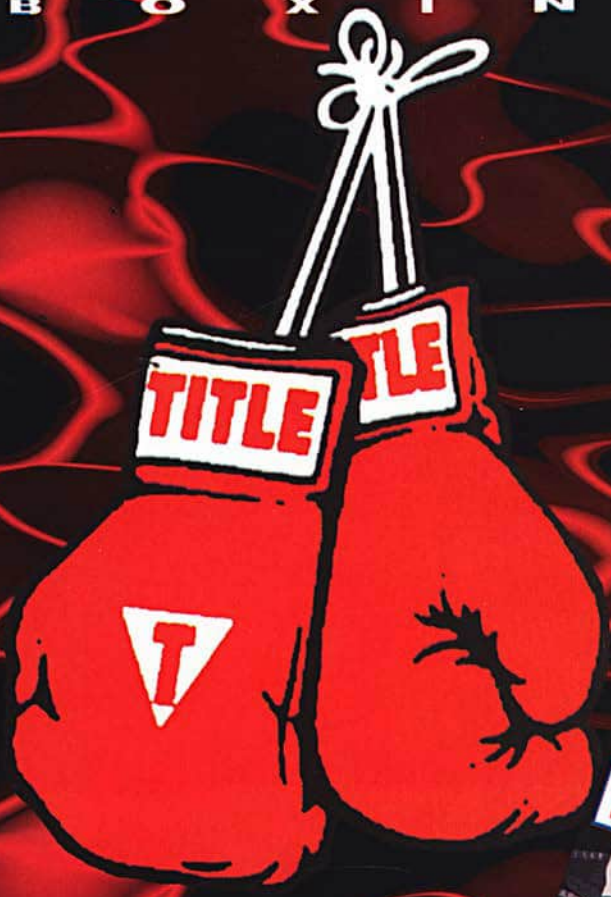
"It's been an incredible year in terms of giving the fans the fights they wanted to see. And the credit has to go to the fighters. They realize they're in a time period where number ones are fighting number twos, and they all want to get in on it."

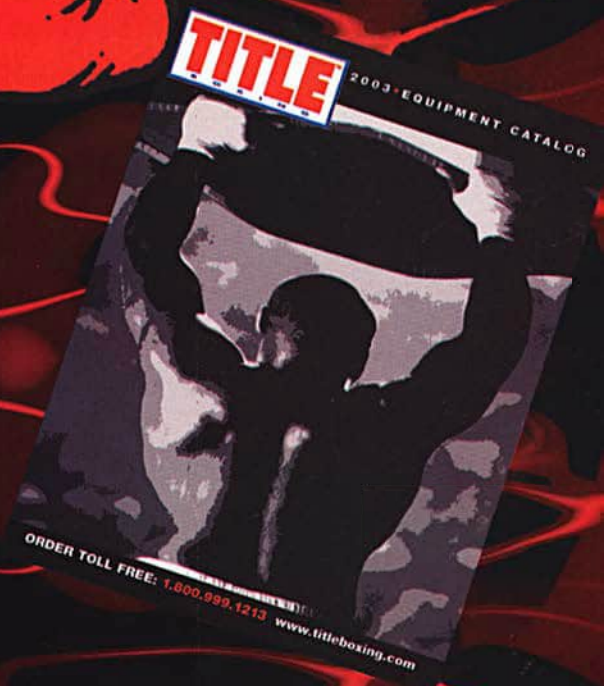
Davis said, however, that fans shouldn't expect to be as lucky in 2003. He figures that the matchmaking miracles of 2002 will be impossible to equal. He's probably right. But that doesn't mean 2003 can't be a damned fine year in its own right, and most of the matches being signed for the first few months suggest that it will be.

LISTEN UP

The welterweight division is definitely off to a great start in '03. Forrest has announced that he'll face WBA beltholder **Ricardo Mayorga** on January 25, and an excellent matchup between **Antonio Margarito** and **Andrew Lewis** has been signed for February 8 ... On February 15, **Tim Austin** will defend his bantamweight belt against deserving mandatory **Rafael Marquez** on HBO's *Boxing After Dark* ... Scotland's **Scott Harrison** will make his first defense of the WBO featherweight strap against Irishman **Wayne McCullough**, probably in Glasgow in March. "I'm just a little surprised that Harrison wants to lose his world title so quickly," McCullough quipped. ■

TITLE BOXING





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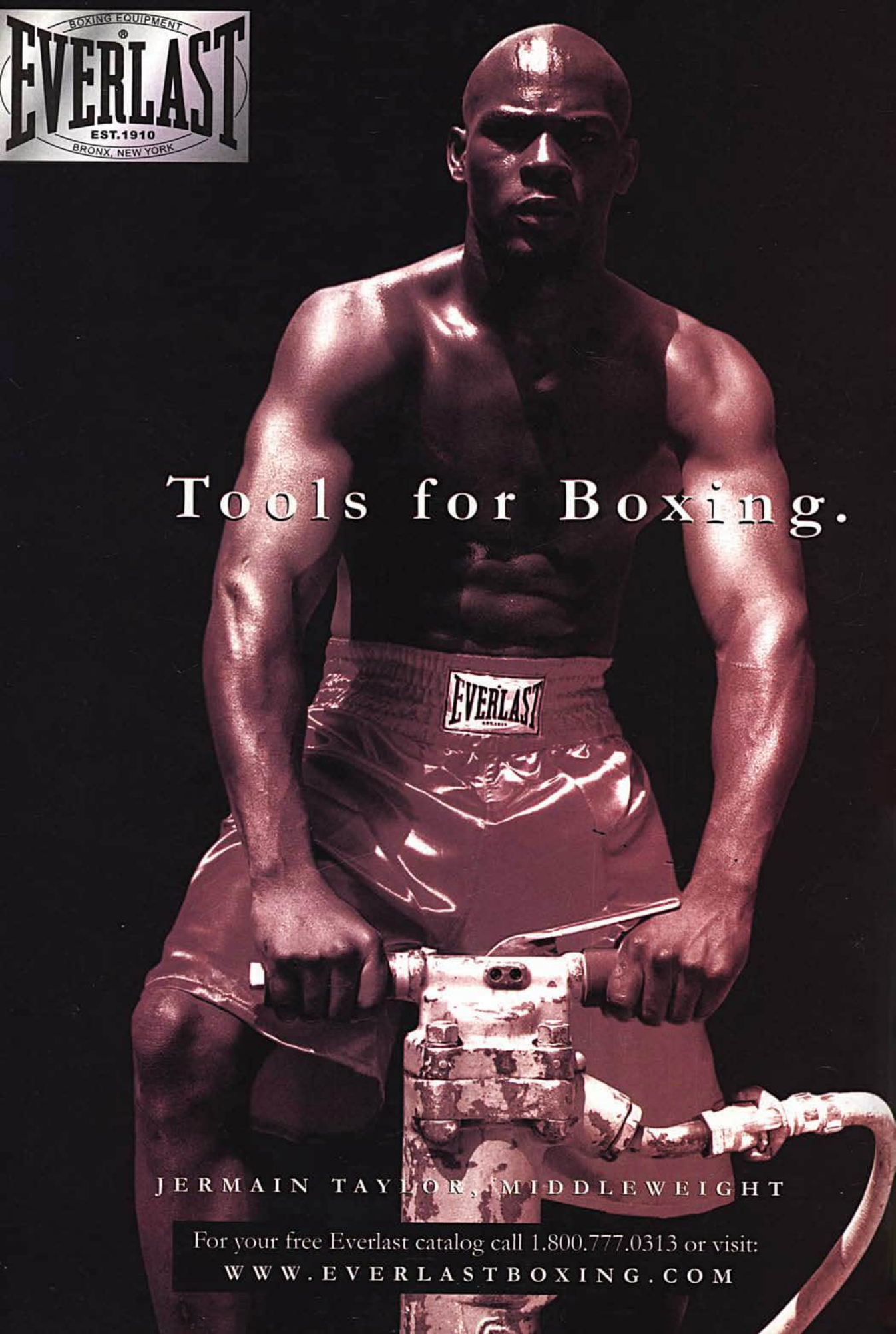
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